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In the time of the entrepreneurs

John Turner

In the twilight of the British economy, the Great and the Good have embraced the ideology of entrepreneurship. Like repentant drinkers at a temperance meeting, public figures queue up to announce that the secret of success is to adopt the methods of the private business man. By his acts and example, given enough respect, encouragement and tax breaks, the entrepreneur will win back our place in the sun. Government has a duty to promote economic realism and "Victorian values" in public opinion. Anyone who tries to divert the people from wealth creation must be fought. Trade unions must be put in their place and the "power to manage" retained. To develop an "enterprise culture" is the highest goal of politicians, educators and quite a number of clergymen. Our lack of it is blamed for our economic weakness. This mode of thought has two of the three elements essential to an ideology: a self-contained explanation of present ills and a strategy for the future which is derived from the explanation.

The doctrine took shape as polemic in the Institute of Economic Affairs and became practical politics in the hands of Mrs Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph. It found a historical dimension in Martin Wiener's *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* (1981). This remarkably influential book, built on a mountain of selective quotation, suggested that Britain's commitment to economic growth was never full-blooded, that anti-industrialism reached to the heart of Britain's industrial elite, and that the economic decline was thus explained by culture rather than economics. Perhaps because it makes attractive reading for those who have more cultural than economic insight, Wiener's thesis has become a part of received wisdom. It has helped to goad the intelligentsia into making amends for its past crimes. It provides the essential third element in the ideology of entrepreneurship, a universal and coherent reading of history which supports both present explanations and future prescriptions.

Sidgwick and Jackson's *Library of Management Classics* appears at first to be a straightforward act of redemption by guilt-laden literary. Six titles selected as the pillars of entrepreneurial wisdom are reprinted, each with an introduction by a worthy person. Sir Keith Joseph gets Samuel Smiles; HRH the Duke of Edinburgh (an honorary entrepreneur, like Prince Albert) gets *Parkinson's Law*; other volumes are blessed by industrial leaders such as John Egan and Sir Peter Parker. The whole enterprise has an air of gravity, of intellectual lineage, which makes an interesting contrast with a recent crop of books of practical advice from Wildwood House and the more introverted special studies by management academics. Here, it seems, is the best of the corpus on which the new ethos of entrepreneurship is based, brought together by an editor (George Bull, lately of the *Director*) and a publisher well attuned to the New Thought. If at the end the doctrine is rather opaque that, surely, is not their fault. But the exercise raises quite profound difficulties for entrepreneurialism in all its three elements. On inspection the six pillars stand at distinctly

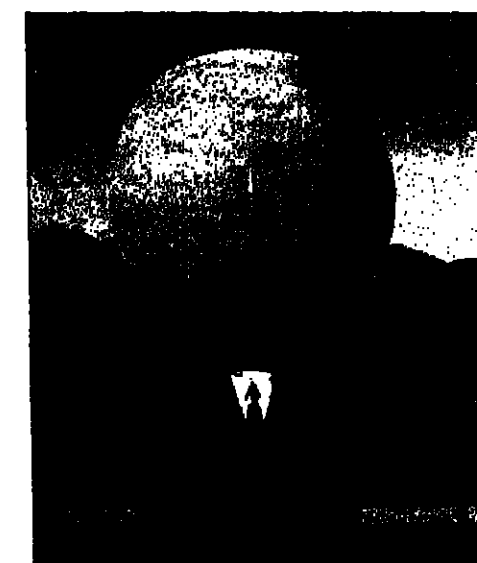
odd angles to one another. Samuel Smiles's *Self Help* (first published in 1859) and C. Northcote Parkinson's *Parkinson's Law* (1958) are both about the nature of man. Their connection with the enterprise culture, notwithstanding anything said by Joseph, is very tenuous. Alfred P. Sloan's business autobiography (1963) and H. Igor Ansoff's textbook for corporate entrepreneurs (1965) are both about the United States: Sloan is dealing with General Motors, one of the biggest private corporations the world has ever seen. The lessons to be drawn for Britain from these two books are not clear, since the requirements for corporate success include access to the largest domestic market in the world.

The greatest surprises, though, are in J. A. C. Brown's *Social Psychology of Industry* (1954) and Richard Tanner Pascale and Anthony G. Athos's *Art of Japanese Management* (1981). Both books explicitly or implicitly condemn the deliberate exercise of the "power to manage" and attack the single-minded pursuit of personal gain as a motivating force in a healthy economic life. Pascale and Athos find reason to praise in Japanese culture some of the very attitudes which Wiener has blamed for the decline of British industry. Brown condemns the use of unemployment as a stick to beat the unions, ridicules the use of motivational tricks by managers who see workers as mere instruments for profit, and derides the competence of those who appeal to the "power to manage". All the time he insists with utter plausibility that he is wholeheartedly on the side of capitalist entrepreneurs, who are the paymasters of industrial psychology. His model of a well-managed organization for many purposes is not, as one might expect, an anarchist commune but rather the British Army. When Athos and Pascale suggest that Japanese business culture lacks the individual competitiveness whose absence Wiener laments in declining Britain; when Brown argues that the single-minded pursuit of profit is very likely to result in unproductive industry; when Smiles, read with care, implies that "Victorian values" are not what their modern worshippers have suggested; when Sloan and Ansoff recommend bureaucracy, caution and planning rather than adventurism: then it is time to have second thoughts about the entrepreneurial ideology.

Perhaps the editor and publishers of the *Library of Management Classics* have set out to cause trouble. Their material is undeniably classic. The cheap and accessible "know-how" books from Wildwood House, which expect the aspiring manager to have a very short attention-span and an aversion to continuous prose, are built on the foundation laid by Sloan, Brown and Ansoff. Both classics and moderns emphasize the difficulty of translating the visceral urge to make money into a successful and lasting business. Lack of competence does as much damage as lack of ambition or lack of popular esteem, and the portrait of British management painted in this literature suggests that entrepreneurialist simplicities have up to now done more harm than good. These are not books to be read with enjoyment in the Institute of Economic Affairs.

Smiles's *Self Help* is more cited than quoted and more quoted than read. It is part of an ancient literary tradition of exemplars for youth, and is written in the language and moral context of mid-Victorian prosperity. The genre has produced great literature - Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* comes to mind - but the Victorians typically combined it with hagiography, which is less attractive. Smiles was not a great writer, but his brief biographies bear the mark of an inspired teacher. His values were worn on his sleeve, and except for some sentimentality and undue earnestness they are not gauche or offensive. Ninety per cent of the book is politically neutral. Smiles's main failings are an unquenchable optimism about the human condition, which distances him from the social philosophers of the Right, and a very shaky literary judgment. No one who thinks Bulwer Lytton was a great author can be taken entirely seriously. On the central political issues which are supposed to make him a "Management Classic", he has clear if unexpected positions. He is not very interested in the skills of management or the preoccupation with business. Even in an abridgement which exaggerates the importance of business men,

Smiles's interest in business men as entrepreneurs is very limited. He does not value money as a motive: indeed he devotes a chapter to decrying it. His exemplars of perseverance certainly begin with early industrialists, but he goes on to devote similar space to artists, generals, politicians, churchmen and reformers. What they have in common, a constellation of worthy attributes not amounting to genius, is far more important to Smiles than anything which distinguishes entrepreneurs from the rest. Indeed, some of his stories of successful industrialists have an uncanny ambiguity. What are we to make of Palissy, who produced beautiful enamelled pottery after sixteen years of frenetic muddle? Or of the moral virtues of John Frederick Böttger, the alchemist? Böttger's bluff was called by the Elector of Saxony, who offered to hang him if



Alfred P. Sloan's "The Art of Living" (1967), taken from Magritte by A. M. Hamannacher (127pp. Thames and Hudson, £12.95, 0 500 08025 9).

he did not produce gold to pay the mutinous Polish regiments. Instead he re-invented white porcelain, but remained a prisoner until he died at the age of thirty-five. One can understand Sir Keith Joseph's frustration as he tries to turn *Self Help* into a tract about the evils of collectivism, the virtues of private ownership, and entrepreneurs as economic prime movers. Smiles's interest in the working of the economy is nearly invisible. Even his first chapter, entitled "Self Help: National and individual" and insisting that "the function of Government is negative and restrictive", can be read two ways. It is a condemnation of positive state action, but only to the extent that Smiles knew about positive state action: he was no prophet, and much of what he has to say need be little more than a comment on the futility of collective provision as it was known in the mid-nineteenth century. Moreover, the corollary of Smiles's insistence on *self help* is a hostility to the inheritance of wealth. Joseph's introduction is a desperate and in places incoherent attempt to score political points by avoiding what Smiles actually wrote. *Self Help* is about individuals, not individualism, and its message is as much for commissars as for tycoons.

The other *Management Classics* have rather better claims to be part of a developing body of thought about the conduct of business. Like other doctrine, business theory grows partly by refinement, partly by expansion, and only partly by a true dialectic. Alfred P. Sloan's autobiography is not the first of these works to be published, but it has a logical priority. Sloan presided over the growth to maturity of General Motors: he was the man who said words to the effect that what is good for General Motors is good for the United States. His life story is a painfully prosaic account of the steady rise of the son of a wholesale tea and cigar merchant. After going to college and getting a good degree in engineering, young Sloan joined a roller-bearing firm called Hyatt, of which he subsequently took control. Until he was thirty-nine he devoted himself to making money out of roller-bearings. Then, in 1916, William C. Durant, the president of General Motors and one of his chief customers, offered to buy out his company for \$13.5 million, a good deal of which went to Sloan. By 1918 he was a senior director of General Motors. The company had been founded in 1908 by Durant, who was president until 1920. Durant had been forced to seek financial backing, and effective control

of the company lay with the Du Pont chemical company, which had helped him to regain operating control in 1915. By 1920 General Motors was worth at least \$170 million and produced 17 per cent of the cars and trucks sold in the United States. That year, Durant was toppled from the presidency by a complex stockmarket scandal involving General Motors shares: his place was taken by Pierre Du Pont, with a three-man executive committee which included Sloan. From this position Sloan won his place in the pantheon of great managers.

Sloan's achievement at GM was based on his "Organization Study", which appears to have sprung almost entirely from his own head in 1919 and 1920. In its finished form it was a blueprint for the operation of a huge business corporation which has remained a model for large companies throughout the world. Sloan proposed that the companies which composed General Motors should be treated as "operating divisions", responsible for all their own commercial operations, but supervised by a central staff which would be responsible for overall policy and finance. Each division would have its own engineering, production and sales departments. It would be expected to make a profit, and to deal with other divisions to which it might supply goods as it would with any other customer. The directors and the president controlled this decentralized structure by argument and persuasion and in the last resort through the purse: divisions had to get large capital appropriations by making a case to the central "policy" staff. In a capital-intensive business, this sanction was enough. Sloan, who became president after Dupont's retirement in 1923, also conceived the "product policy" which became the hallmark of General Motors. The company had cars for every price range, each price range being assigned to an operating division, from Cadillac at the top to Chevrolet at the bottom. By 1925 GM was committed to the annual model change, which transformed the car market and incidentally paid to Henry Ford's supremacy, based on the ageless, but now ageing Model T.

The astonishing feature of these innovations in business policy and practice is that they have survived with little fundamental change for more than sixty years. Sloan continued to strengthen his financial controls over the operating divisions and tinker with the balance between central and divisional initiative in policy, but the multi-divisional company is now recognized as the true "modern" form of business organization. Characteristically, large companies are therefore controlled by accountants, who manage the financial controls by which head offices execute their policy. The value of financial control is such that large companies have further evolved a "matrix hierarchy" of command, in which "line" managers are answerable not only to their "line" superiors, but also to financial controllers who answer to more senior financial controllers. Somewhere at the top there is a committee, or even a man, into whose hands all the strands of information eventually come. This is more than Sloan foresaw, but there is nothing about it that he would have found alarming. Business, especially big business, is about committees and paperwork.

This was not only true of GM: all large American firms developed in much the same way. In 1962 Alfred Chandler at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology propounded a four-stage model of corporate growth in which firms first accumulated resources, then rationalized the use of those resources by setting up a coherent management structure before entering a third phase in which growth was continued. In the fourth phase the new resources were in turn rationalized, probably with a wider range of products or activities. Chandler's thesis, which has changed the course of business history, supposes that a firm's response to the market (its strategy) will determine its structure. In further work he has observed that a firm's capacity to survive and prosper depends not only on "satisfying the consumer" and other policies, but on its capacity to control the markets in which it works and to bring as many of those markets as possible within its own sphere of influence, if not directly into its own hands. Managerial skill, as much as entrepreneurial skill, becomes the key to success.

(Chandler's thesis and Sloan's book influ-

A prodigious dream of totality

Arthur C. Danto

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

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The terms "totality" and "totalization" occur with increasing frequency in the late philosophical writings of Sartre, and though the concepts to which they correspond were present at the beginning, they refer, in his earlier thought, primarily to the structure of the single life, whereas in the later writings they refer to social and political structures, as well as to the way or ways the individual life and the enveloping structures relate to one another. In those last, swollen, difficult works, desperately in need of editorial modulation, the problem with which Sartre struggled as a thinker almost perfectly coincided with his struggle as a person, to reconcile both his extreme independence with the social commitments in which he increasingly believed, and the unqualified metaphysical freedom of the person with his visions of societies in which the individual was fully and fulfillingly integrated. Ideologically speaking, the effort was to reconcile Existentialism, which he never forsook, with Marxism, which he could not resist. Perhaps no more revealing approach to either his life or his philosophy could be found than in tracing the adventures of totalization as the leading idea in both. In terms of one of his most audacious theses, one might say that totalization was his original project, with his life and his philosophy parallel examples of what it meant.

In *L'Être et le néant* he had written (my translation):

Man is a totality and not a collection. Consequently he expresses himself as a whole in even his most insignificant and most superficial behaviour. In other words there is not a taste, a mannerism, or a human act that is not revealing.

It would be inevitable – it would be a matter of totalistic necessity – that Sartre would be concerned with biography in a philosophical way: that biography would be an enmeshment of his metaphysics. In *L'Être et le néant* he announces two biographies – one of Flaubert and one of Dostoevsky – but biographical preoccupations possessed him already in his philosophical novel, *La Nausée*, whose hero, after all, is the biographer Roquentin. The difficulties Roquentin encounters in getting at the life of his subject moved Sartre, in his philosophical writings, to elaborate them as matters of ontology, and, in the other direction, moved the hero of the novel to undertake a novel which, just because a work of art, must exemplify the totalistic structure he fails to find in life. *La Nausée* itself has the form of a diary, a series of notations and memoranda – a collection – which, when read as a narrative, is fused into a totality. Since in any case "everything is revealing," since "there are no accidents in life," the concern with totalization must itself be totalized as an expression of the totality that is Sartre. Whatever else he may do, he expresses the full totality of his being, and his biographies – of Baudelaire, of Genet, and of course of Flaubert – have often been perceived as disguised essays in autobiography. It is not surprising – it is no accident, as totalizing thinkers like to say – that his one absolute masterpiece is his autobiography, in which he could confront directly, and with narcissistic enthusiasm, the personage he knew himself to be. But even in the most remote and abstract of his texts, we are never very far from autobiography. And the texts come most forcefully to life when we recognize that it is his own life he is describing.

Sartre characterizes a totality as follows in the first volume of the *Critique de la raison dialectique* (originally reviewed in the *TLS* of May 5, 1961):

A being which, radically distinct from the sum of its parts, is to be found, under one form or another, in each of those parts, and which enters into a relationship with itself, either with respect to one or several of its parts, or with respect to [par rapport à] relations which all or several of its parts sustain among themselves.

A good example of a totality in this sense might be the opera *Don Giovanni*, since experts claim that there is an unmistakable "Don Giovanni style" recognizable in no other work of Mozart. Sartre uses works of art as his best examples of totalities, and insists that a totality is something made, or constructed, and hence has the status of what he terms *l'imaginaire* – the product of an act of imagination. Thus, by reading in a certain way, we confer totality on what is but a set of jottings, as in *La Nausée*. But totalization is a synthesizing activity found throughout the sphere of human practice, and dialectical reason itself is "nothing other than the movement of totalization as such". Totalization consists in an ensemble, or set, "making itself manifest to itself through the mediation of its parts". Imagination and the imaginary were among the first of Sartre's philosophical concerns. They reappear, under the rubric of totalization and totality, twenty-five years later, in the *Critique*, and seeing them together is itself an act of totalization if Sartre's evolving system is a totality.

La raison dialectique is sharply counterposed to *la raison analytique*, and Sartre over and over again throughout the *Critique* is at pains to point to things revealed to dialectical reason to which analytical reason is blind. Indeed, analytical reason is misapplied to human reality since its primary field is the *En-soi* – the world as mere object as opposed to practice (Heidegger's distinction between *Vorhandene* and *Zuhandene* peers out from behind Sartre's terms) – or the world as mere body as opposed to consciousness or the *Pour-soi*. The *En-soi* is inert and "ronquée par une infinie divisibilité". Dialectical reason, or totalization, exemplifies human reality construed as practice. Infinite divisibility was tendered by Descartes in the *Synopsis* to the *Meditations* as the criterion of the bodily, with indivisibility as the correlative distinguishing property of the soul or mind. Totalization is then meant, in Sartre's system, to express the kind of unity the mind has. It is a constructed or imagined unity, as with a work of art. It is not that a life need be a work of art, as in Goethe's famous imperative, but only that lives on the one hand and works of art on the other are examples of (forgive me) totalizing totalities.

Critique de la raison dialectique is addressed to social and historical unities – the second, posthumously published volume is specifically concerned with the totalization of conflict – but it is also concerned with the structure of thought or reason appropriate to these matters, so that the book moves on two levels at once. One must be reminded of the way in which Descartes, in the *Second Meditation*, demonstrates that whatever we may have learned about physical bodies, in thinking out the criteria of identity and change for the celebrated piece of wax, we have learned even more about ourselves, in reflecting on the way we have just been thinking. We are always led back to the self. It is this that perhaps vindicates the bold use of "critique" in the title – one does not lightly invite comparison with Kant – since the *Critique of Pure Reason* reflects back on to the act of reading it, almost as though the text serves as a *repossoir* for what the mind goes through in coming to terms with it, and we learn about ourselves not just as its subject but as its readers. Sartre's *Critique* is intended, then, to exemplify what it also addresses, and we are to catch dialectical reason in the act, as we read about it. Admittedly, this is to give Sartre a certain credit not altogether licensed by the text, sprawling and arid but punctuated with brilliancies, as one might expect of a mind like his, prodded and sustained by the desperate administration of amphetamines during its composition (if that is the word). It is easier, in a way, to totalize it into the larger enterprise of Sartre's philosophy than to totalize it as such. The central idea of totality and of totalization connects with the early notions of original choice and of existential psychoanalysis, both of which refer us to the single life (a topic only lately receiving attention from analytical philosophers, most notably Rawls, Nagel and Wollheim), and thence to the topic of philosophical biography.

In *Les Mots*, Sartre addressed the question of what could have accounted for his having become precisely the individual he was. "This, in its most general form, was the animating question of his philosophy, and certainly of the *Critique*. In "Questions de méthode" – which prefaces the *Critique* exactly as the *Discours de la méthode* (that aradigm of *la raison analytique*) prefaces Descartes's treatises on geometry, optics and meteors – Sartre lays out the problem that Existentialism raises for Marxism:

Valéry was a petit-bourgeois intellectual. Of that there is no doubt. But not every petit-bourgeois intellectual is Valéry. The heuristic insufficiency of contemporary Marxism is contained in these two sentences. Existentialism . . . means, without being unfaithful to the principles of Marxism [aux thèses marxistes], to find the meditations which permit the concrete singular to be engendered – the life, the real and dated conflict, the person – from the general contradictions of productive forces and the relations to production.

It was thus that the Immense study of Flaubert was meant to be a philosophical demonstration, an existentialist-marxist biography, and the crowning achievement of his life, seen as a whole. *L'Être et le néant* is about *individual consciousness*, the *Pour-soi* being almost a metaphor for the *l'être* Sartre raved in his own personality. The *Critique* is about consciousness as social, the individual as penetrated by the social whole of which he is a part. The three-volume life of Flaubert, with the projected study of *Madame Bovary*, was to bring all this together in a *Gesamtwerk*: the social made concrete in the individual artist, the artist totalizing the structures that made him thinkable. Philosophy and biography at once, it was to be a triumph of the progressive-regressive method bravely announced in the *Critique*. Sartre was, when it appeared, *un has-been*, in Annie Cohen-Solal's charming *franglais* – a mere celebrity, a national monument. "Merçi

bien, Jean-Paul", I once saw some startled workers say in a cartoon which showed Sartre lugging the immense tome containing the *Critique* into union headquarters. Thanks but no thanks. The book on Flaubert, even in the academic world which composed his chief audience, was of even less interest than its predecessors. No one could read it save in the totalizing atmosphere of the whole system in which it was inter-referentially situated. And how many are willing to do that?

Because biography is the focus of his philosophy, and his own life the totality through which lives in general were understood by him, there is a sense in which, by contrast with those of most philosophers, a good biography of Sartre must be the best commentary on the thought, since his thought really only acquires vividness when it draws its substance from the life. The *Critique*, *Tom II* is incomplete and fragmentary, full of "boiler-plate" text – undigested passages dutifully copied from his homework, as so often happened in the *War Diaries* when Sartre was being responsible to his role as "witness" – but it contains some wonderful stretches, and Cohen-Solal's wonderfully detailed biography helps us understand why. *Critique II* starts out with a discussion of boxing as an example of institutionalized conflict – and we learn from Cohen-Solal that Sartre was in fact an expert boxer at the École Normale, that he staged exhibition bouts in his prison camp, and that the refusal to accept a draw defined his personal code throughout his life. Cohen-Solal is intuitive in anatomizing Sartre's harem relationships with women, whom he sought to totalize into some collective hyper-female consisting of individual women as parts (he did not fully succeed but neither did he completely fail). And sexuality predictably gives him his most stunning example in *Tom II* of how the individual is the society writ small. Just those "qualities and defects" which, in the eyes of the woman

enced more than just the writing of business history. Management theory came to focus on the strategy by which corporations expanded and controlled their expansion, and after the mid-1960s Sloan and Chandler contributed most of the illustrative material which management theorists needed to back up their advice. Ansoff's *Corporate Strategy* is introduced by a quotation from Sloan: "The strategic aim of a business is to earn a return on capital, and if in any particular case the return in the long run is not satisfactory, then the deficiency should be corrected or the activity abandoned for a more favorable one." Ansoff goes on with remarkable thoroughness to specify the process of decision which will enable a business leader to live up to Sloan's ideal of his duty by choosing between internal expansion, merger, diversification and so on. His advice would seem pedantic and trite if one could forget that in Britain in 1918 the board of Vickers Ltd, which had made £4 million in profit during the war by manufacturing weapons but could not tell exactly where the money had come from, spent some time deciding whether it might diversify into bedsteads or mechanical rabbits, then plumped for buying foreign armaments firms instead and was effectively bankrupt by 1926. In 1986 Sir Clive Sinclair, who created the British home computer market just as Sloan and his associates created the American car market, had to sell up to satisfy his company's creditors. So are the mighty fallen when they will not do their sums. Ansoff's work is at the apogee of "hard" management theory. He is rationalist to a fault, insisting that everything quantifiable should be quantified. He refers, plausibly, to games theory and his book is full of checklists, decision trees, and flowcharts. At the end of this process, which may be expensive in time and money, it may turn out that the best course is to sell up and retire to Florida, a conclusion which Ansoff does not shrink. If applied too rigorously to British companies this might lead to overpopulation in Brighton: John Harvey-Jones of ICI, who praises strategic clarity in his cautious introduction, is understandably relieved that "there is still room for flair, intuition, perception, foresight and luck".

Hard management theory prospered until the 1970s, when the economic expectations of the West were rudely upset, first by oil prices and then by Japan. Its mnemonic checklist approach has shaped a literature, but the checklists are not expanded to include some "soft" elements. To Strategy, Structure and Systems (ie, information systems and financial controls such as those introduced by Sloan),

Athos and Pascale add Style, Staff, Skills and Superordinate Goals. This admittedly crude schema allows them to concentrate on aspects of Japanese culture which lead to economic success in defiance of Western management theory. There are some rich ironies here. Athos and Pascale take the Matsushita organization as a case study, comparing it with International Telephone and Telegraph, which is broadly similar in product range and size. Without using a sociological vocabulary, they make it clear that Matsushita succeeds because it is more like a "total organization". Its managers value human relations, within management and between managers and workers. Managers achieve progress and change by something which, in Athos and Pascale's description, looks very much like tact and ordinary good manners, coupled with the deliberate ambiguity and patience which allow dissenters to come round to the prevailing view without trauma. Executives whose performance is unsatisfactory are never sacked, just moved to a less demanding job. Morale is maintained: the spirit (or superordinate goal) of the company is explicitly defined as a creed which includes "spiritual values" such as "struggle for betterment", "adjustment and assimilation" and "gratitude". An important element in this superordinate goal is social responsibility.

The authors contrast this rather mischievously with the management style of Harold Geneen at ITT, a legendary figure among American managers. Like Mr Matsushita, Geneen built up an extremely successful company, but he did so by concentrating on the "hard" elements of management. He emphasized results, a rich flow of factual and financial information upwards, an utter commitment to the company by senior managers, and a strategy and structure appropriate to ITT's markets. A personnel department watched the performance and psychological development of every aspiring manager. The price of failure or even weakness was dismissal. The superordinate goal of ITT was to return ever-greater profits. So long as Geneen lasted, this was achieved. When he retired, the company's structure and management systems could not by themselves maintain his success. In explaining the contrast Athos and Pascale put great weight on differences of style. Geneen was an unmitigated swine who regularly terrorized and humiliated his subordinates. Motivation was maintained by the alternation of fear and large monetary rewards. Individual achievement and responsibility were overestimated at the expense of loyalty to subordinates and

working groups. Geneen's style was to harness individual self-interest and mutual competition to the good of the institution: and it failed.

Like Wiener, Athos and Pascale are guilty of understating the economic explanation of economic phenomena. They have a rather narrow perception of Japanese, or American, economic history which allows neither the penalty of being first in the field, nor for the advantages conferred on companies like Matsushita or Sony by an enormous secondary economy of small price-cutting subcontractors who have nothing of the job-security, corporate philosophy, or sustained prosperity enjoyed by the giant firms. But they throw a penetrating light on the reasons why successful companies succeed, showing that the most robust American companies tend towards the Japanese model. The most forceful example is perhaps IBM, which has prospered remarkably by making and selling technically backward computing equipment in every corner of the world. IBM has the advantage of market dominance in most of what it does, but it also has the legacy of Thomas Watson, Jr, who imposed a pious set of basic beliefs (superordinate goals) on the company in the 1940s that have largely survived to motivate IBM's staff. Athos and Pascale would like to see this managerial attitude extended to more American companies: they are supported by Donald K. Clifford and Richard E. Cavanagh's *The Winning Performance*, a study of fast-growing medium-sized companies. Another product of the McKinsey management consultancy, Thomas J. Peters and Robert Waterman's *In Search of Excellence* (1983), has the same message for large companies. This is now the received managerial wisdom, which appears in the handbooks by Boll Scott and Sven Söderberg (*The Art of Managing*) and Mike Woodcock and Dave Francis (*The Unblocked Manager*) noticed here.

This has profound implications for our understanding of the British disease. If their prescription were translated into British terms it would lay an emphasis on managerial style which the entrepreneurialists ignore. There are managerial models in British culture which reflect the values, corporate goals and management processes of the Japanese corporation. They are the army, the churches and the universities, whose baleful influence is so sweepingly condemned by Wiener and the New Right. Anyone who has spent long hours in a university committee, or even read *Microcosmographica Academica* with imaginative insight, will recognize the decision process of the Japanese corporation described by Athos

and Pascale. It will come as no surprise that Parkinson's Law and Ted Stephenson's *Management: A political activity* rely implicitly on *Microcosmographica* as a guide to getting things done. The historic failing of British management in this respect has been a want of subtlety and patience, not a want of hubbub. Another failing in Britain has been a muddled approach to the company as a social unit. While the social cohesion of upper management has been overstressed, in the clubbiness of the executive dining-room, the typical relationship between management and manual workers has always aggravated the hostility created by class antagonism and conflict of economic interest. As J. A. C. Brown points out, there will always be conflicts: the trade union movement exists to defend its members' interest in those conflicts. The inference to be drawn from Athos and Pascale is that good profit-making management will minimize the distance between employer and worker by economic fairness and recognition of the corporate culture of the workers. Most British industrial managers, in the public or the private sector, have preferred to keep the two sides apart. The results speak for themselves, and it seems odd that the political establishment should now encourage managers to repeat their mistakes with great emphasis.

This large body of literature, of which the books noticed here are but a small and recent sample, should be read by historians and politicians alike, indeed by anyone concerned about British economic decline. The historic faults which are there to be perceived are not precisely what the fashionable entrepreneurial ideology would suggest. British industrial management has lacked the rationalist, intellectual dimension that successful American companies began to demonstrate in the 1920s. "Conviction management" is no more effective in the long run than "conviction politics". But British management has also over-emphasized individualism. Self-interest and mutual competition, within firms or between them, do not automatically create mutual prosperity. Production for profit, separated from the social utility of the items produced or the social consequences of the act of production, is not the key to a healthy company, let alone a healthy society. An ideology which prefers confrontation to compromise, favours a fictitious "realism" over studied ambiguity, assumes that money is the only incentive to work, and derides any sort of service unless it is carried out for private profit, is not only historically baseless and ethically unappealing. It is almost bound to fail.

Making good

T. C. Barker

J. A. CANTRELL

James Nasmyth and the Bridgewater Foundry: A study of entrepreneurship in the early engineering industry
279pp. Manchester University Press. £25. 07190 13399

Nineteenth-century inventors stand a better chance of being remembered by posterity than business men, especially if they attracted the attention of Samuel Smiles. James Nasmyth, who managed to do this twice, is certainly one of the heroic figures who, along with Watt, the Stephensons and the rest, established Britain's manufacturing base. J. A. Cantrell, who has worked very meticulously through business records, goes into informative detail about how this was achieved. He presents a rather different view from what was previously believed. There is more to Nasmyth than the Steam Hammer.

The Bridgewater Foundry was built between 1836 and 1838 at Patricroft, just outside Manchester, on what was then a green-field site served by both canal and railway. On these six open acres Nasmyth contrived to lay out the buildings in such a way that the work could flow from the foundry through the machine-shops to the lofty erection-hall, where the parts were prepared for fitting, filing and assembly prior to dispatch, usually by water. This pur-

pose-built showpiece was very different from the mean little first-floor workshop in the centre of Manchester where Nasmyth had started business two years earlier with a capital of only £63. How did this young Scot, still in his mid-twenties, make such a remarkable leap?

By this time an entrepreneur did not need to toil long and hard in order to accumulate the profits that were necessary to grow: he attracted the necessary support from others in whom he had inspired confidence. Nasmyth, good at drawing and helped by his father, a well-known Edinburgh portrait and landscape painter, showed an early interest in machinery and then contrived to be employed in London by the leading engineer of his day: Henry Maudslay. On his arrival in Manchester in 1834, he displayed all-round inventive and business talent and quickly gained many orders. He soon developed far greater ambitions. In explaining these, the author is able to set Nasmyth's aspirations within the context of the engineering industry's broader development at that time.

In the earlier days of industrialization, highly skilled millwrights were required to perform a wide range of engineering tasks; but with the coming of wood and metal working machinery – by "the substitution of a mechanical contrivance in place of the human hand for holding, applying and directing the motions of a cutting tool to the surface of the work" – such all-round skills were no longer required. More specialized craftsmen, using machines, could achieve better results in a shorter time. A

planing machine, for instance, costing perhaps about £500, could cut labour costs from 12 shillings per square foot to less than a penny. This was no new concept in the 1830s; but the ingenious Nasmyth saw the fortune that awaited anybody who could develop machine-tool manufacture in a special, purpose-built factory, especially if he could concentrate upon a small range of standardized products, some of which could be immediately available from stock.

His proved business acumen and clear vision enabled him to attract a good commercial partner, Holbrook Gaskell, then aged only twenty-three but already with nine years' practical experience, to take charge of the cash, credit and cost control side of the venture. He also attracted starting capital, soon totalling over £40,000, from a family of wealthy Manchester merchants and textile manufacturers. When they withdrew, others were at hand to finance the business in their stead.

Nasmyth, Gaskell and Co soon found itself making not only machine-tools but also steam-engines and steam hammers. Again, production was standardized from stock designs, though in these cases sale from stock was evidently more difficult. Locomotives were also in demand, especially in the early years, and more than 100 were made, more than half for the Great Western Railway to Daniel Gooch's design. There is much in these pages for steam locomotive enthusiasts.

Nasmyth lived close to his works, lived for his business, and was soon worn out by it. He

retired at the early age of forty-eight. A major cause of his anxiety, it is worthy of note, was trade union activity, for the engineers were among the first group of skilled men to become organized. The Patricroft business had begun with a strike, broken only by importing sixty men from Scotland. Even they, however, were not malleable enough for Nasmyth. "The men," he lamented, "are not as docile as machines." With such an arbitrary attitude towards his labour force, it is not surprising to learn that he believed he was operating on top of "a continuously threatening trade union volcano that was likely to burst out at any moment". So, in 1856, he decided to retire to the restful south of England, taking with him his share in the business, then worth £110,000. He must have invested shrewdly, for when he died, at the age of eighty-one, he left nearly £250,000. He was cremated, we are told, and his ashes were sent back to Scotland in a brown-paper parcel so as to avoid the full passenger fare then normally charged on human ashes.

Dust to dust; but Dr Cantrell has produced a well-rounded study which corrects many parts of his subject's own testimony (such as the overlooking of the early financial help he obtained and the assistance of his older brother) and presents us with a very credible portrait of the resourceful, thrusting, acquisitive business leader of the kind required to establish Britain's industrial base. There are probably many such men today in Japan or Taiwan.

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who loves him, define a man's "private character, and concern only his private relationship with her" are – "au contraire" – "the very realization of his objective relationships" so that even in *l'acte de chair* the full weight of the enveloping society is made manifest. The "au contraire" is, one might add, the whole intellectual structure of L'École Normale made concrete in those marvellous inversions of the expected which are the spice of Sartre's thought. (Man is not a sexual being because he possesses sexual organs. *Au contraire* . . .)

There is a famous episode, recorded in the autobiography of Simone de Beauvoir, in which Raymond Aron told Sartre that if he were to become a phenomenologist, he could make philosophy even out of the apricot cocktail he was drinking. Indefatigable researcher, Cohen-Solal checked this against Aron's recollection, which was that it was a glass of beer. My inclination is to trust Beauvoir on such matters, since she was an inveterate diarist and probably wrote it all down that fateful evening at the Bec de Gaz. Moreover, thinking totalistically, apricot cocktails have exactly the right cachet for *normalien* swank. But what Sartre did throughout his life was, in effect, to make philosophy out of apricot cocktails or glasses of beer. Nothing was metaphysically weightless, everything was totalized and totalized and totalized. "Won't he ever stop talking?" Cohn-Bendit wondered in despair, echoing John Huston's complaint that Sartre drowned him in a torrent of words. If Mallarmé had described a symptom of a certain sort in the belief that the world existed to be put into a piece of writing, Sartre was its most spectacular victim. Alas, not everything put into his books was a piece of the world, and Cohen-Solal helps us understand the difference.

What she does not help us understand is the existential meaning of totality for Sartre, but that is not a criticism of her. Existential psychoanalysis, Sartre said, awaits its Freud, but when he or she arrives, any explanation must be totalized, so that no single event or episode – say the early death of a father – is explanatory on its own and in abstraction from the unitary *Zusammenhang* of the whole life. What she does help us to see is the extreme poignancy with which Sartre yearned for a totality of a certain sort, one in which, almost mystically, he would be absorbed in the larger community and not left outside as a mere observer, a posture he detested – though it was always, save in rare moments, his true posture. He wanted to be one with a society as he was

one with his body, according to a famous analysis in *L'Être et le néant*. On the surprising equanimity with which he endured being a prisoner-of-war, he said "J'ai trouvé au Stalag une forme de vie collective que je n'avais plus connue depuis l'École Normale et je veux dire qu'en somme j'y étais heureux." Of China he wrote: "Ce qui caractérise le Chine d'aujourd'hui c'est que le mur de solitude est brisé. Nulle part je n'ai vu une pareille solidarité." In the Soviet Union he was taken with the way the individual is "immediately integrated into the society". The same illusion dissolved his critical instincts in 1968 and afterwards when he allowed himself to become a mascot of the opportunist young, as willingly degraded as the professor in *The Blue Angel*: "Avec les maos il y avait un vrai rapport humain." He even used the intimate form of address – the "tu" – with the distasteful Benny Levy, though it had always been "vous" with his intimates, including Simone de Beauvoir. These revealing utterances express the personal reality that corresponds to the hopeful and pessimistic vision of the *groupe-en-fusion* discussed in the *Critique*. It was a vision he used to castigate the bourgeois culture he despised and exemplifies – though, being a society, bourgeois culture had to be totalistic if there is anything to the notion at all. It was not totalization but a special and romantic kind of totality that was his moral and political dream.

Sartre totalized the century, I suppose, in the sense that he was responsive with theories to each of the great events he lived through. And for a few years he did more – he represented history, he was history during the *années sartré*, just after 1945, when the world saw the meaning of the war, of occupation, of a Europe liberated, of a night lifted, in his work and his life. This utter identification may have spelled the *has-been-ness* to come, when the theories seemed to grate against the consciousness of the French, to be arbitrary and out of contact with reality to the point that his countrymen seemed glad to walk him to his grave and forget him. No one especially wanted a biography, and we must be grateful to his ardent and conscientious biographer for withstanding this indifference and producing a monumental narrative, full of the inadvertent *clownerie* of Sartre, but also full of his bravery, wit, his wry magnificence, his generosity, genius, unassumingness, hyperbolic industry, and his readiness to plunge *à la folie* into the issues of his age.

The pre-critical phase

Eckart Förster

LEWIS WHITEBECK (Editor)
Kant's Latin Writings: Translations, commentaries and notes
251pp. Peter Lang, 62 West 45th Street, NY 10036. \$39.
0820401676

To most philosophers, Kant is primarily the author of three *Critiques*, namely the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the *Critique of Judgement*. This is not to deny that he published extensively both before and after these works (which appeared within a span of only nine years); yet his other texts have always seemed "minor" by comparison with his three masterpieces, and not worthy of the same intensive study.

This is not entirely without reason. For Kant himself once declared that his "pre-critical" writings were invalidated with the appearance of the first *Critique*. And the completion to which he had brought his system with his third *Critique* seemed to leave little room for subsequent philosophical achievement of similar significance.

Surprisingly, during the last eight years of his life, Kant worked feverishly on a large manuscript to which he repeatedly referred as his "most important work", a "Chef d'oeuvre". But when it gradually became known that his labours culminated in a substantial revision of the critical position, the conviction spread that Kant, at that time, was probably sane – a judgement bound to affect the reception of his

published works from the same period.

But this is only half the story. On the one hand, Kant himself permitted, some years after the third *Critique*, the republication of one of his pre-critical books (*The One Possible Basis*) and later wished to purchase and re-read another (*The Universal Natural History*). On the other hand, the recent intensive study of Kant's late philosophy has not only repudiated the charges of senility, but has also made his pre-critical (and critical) writings appear in a new light. For it has revealed a continuity in Kant's thought, especially in his philosophy of nature, which extends from his earliest writings to his very last, unfinished work – a continuity which belies his own above-mentioned remark, and which is obscured by any exclusive focus on the three *Critiques*.

L. W. Beck and his three collaborators, Mary J. Gregor, Ralf Meerbote and John A. Reuschner, are to be praised for making available in English translation Kant's Latin writings from the pre-critical period. Four of the six pieces are here rendered into English for the first time, and together with the often excellent commentary and notes, this small book provides a first-rate insight into the making of Kant's philosophy, as well as into some of the problems which continued to preoccupy him for almost half a century.

The Hermeneutic Reader: Texts of the German tradition from the Enlightenment to the present, edited by Kurt Mueller-Vollmer (380pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £29.50. 0 631 14833 7), contains selections from the works of several philosophers, including Husserl, Heidegger and Karl-Otto Apel.

Claiming the high ground

Richard Lindley

ROBERT YOUNG
Personal Autonomy: Beyond negative and positive liberty
123pp. Croom Helm. £17.95.
0 7099 29145

Post-war history has been marked by numerous struggles for "national liberation". These are essentially the battles of emerging nation states for autonomy. According to a traditional conception of political sovereignty, for a state to be autonomous is simply for it to be free from external governance. Parallel to this is a popular view of personal autonomy: a person is autonomous to the extent that others do not obstruct his or her pursuits. Robert Young rejects both of these "individualist" conceptions on the grounds that they are too narrow – autonomy requires more than simply the absence of obstruction by others. Although Young is critical of the traditional conception of State autonomy, his main concern is with the personal kind.

If there is any value which liberal democrats share, it is a respect for personal autonomy. This respect led John Stuart Mill to propose his famous principle of liberty, according to which it is wrong, in a civilized society, to restrict the actions of any citizen, except to prevent harm to other people. Mill's principle has been attacked from all quarters, and yet it continues to carry great weight in arguments about how far the State should intervene to promote social welfare. Advocates of personal autonomy have been among the staunchest opponents of extending the Welfare State: "It is better that people should remain autonomous, even if they make more mistakes than they would if a benevolent state removed some of their liberty. Who would want to live in *Brave New World* or 1984?"

Socialists are very suspicious of such apologies for *laissez-faire* political economy, seeing them as rationalizations wheeled in to offer bogus support for unacceptable social and economic inequalities.

The debate between liberal or libertarian and socialist is often presented as an argument about the relative importance of liberty and equality. "Do you regard equality as more important than liberty?" is a question which recently embarrassed Neil Kinnock. Had he read Young's short but detailed analysis he might well have been spared some blushes.

On Young's account, "the fundamental idea in autonomy is that of authoring one's own world without being subject to the will of others". Liberal anti-paternalistic principles derive whatever appeal they have from the claim that people's autonomy is best promoted by governments sitting on the sidelines (except to defend the rule of law), and allowing individuals to make whatever they can of life, through interacting in the market-place. This claim is, however, empirical, and open to refutation.

Young argues that there are many occasions where a current exercise of choice, even autonomous choice, may be opposed to the goal of promoting autonomy overall. In particular, he argues, "the pursuit of economic individualist ideals in a competitive market economy with private property, diminishes personal autonomy for most citizens". If this is true, then socialists may with plausibility defend their goal of greater equality, in the name of respect for the liberal value of respect for autonomy.

It is impossible for a short work of philosophy to do more than gesture in the direction of an answer to the hard empirical issues of political economy, and Young's brief discussion of the ills of private ownership will do little to shake the confidence of the defenders of capitalism. However, his book succeeds admirably in challenging the libertarian's monopoly on appeals to the value of personal autonomy.

The 'Sleep-Out' Wars

Somewhere beyond this fibro sleeve they were creating the world. They'd better or a belligerent sense of fairness was going to fix them once for all. Or so it seemed within my sock of darkness, with the mozzies skirling in the net – inside it, most of them, circling and settling like little blood clots on the mesh. A fire flickered in and out of dreaming, but the world beyond the sleep-out at best was one of the Mosquito Republics, a left-handed place of doing nothing well.

At moments it was all convertible to music. You could make reality from this trite kit or that, from straggling threads of uselessness in relatives and friends, from Nature still available to sandshoe shuffles or bait stowed well above the bilge. The price was always high. Somebody played Delibes on an early Stromberg Carlson radiogram and then the stringybarks and tied-up dinghies faded into river mist. My childhood was much less real than any seventy-eight.

My fights were toggled in coward's livery, hating my service and my country's fate. And yet a little kittenish hedonism found me on surrender Sundays ready to join the nation 'en plein air' – a Satrap of the Suntrap, I varied between Thucydides and 'Cage Me a Peacock': so sex and reading traumatised the house, though every truce was brief. It was war between me and the wattles, and my tan was camouflage for Don Giovanni.

PETER PORTER

Gainful conjunctures

John Kenyon

K. H. D. HALEY
An English Diplomat in the Low Countries: Sir William Temple and John de Witt, 1665–1672
334pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £30.
0 198229178
HERBERT H. ROWEN
John de Witt: Statesman of the "True Freedom"
236pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50.
0 521 30391 5

Sir William Temple is perhaps best known to a wider public as the recipient of Dorothy Osborne's love letters. With his grasp of foreign languages, his urbanity and unfailing patience he was also in a technical sense one of the most accomplished of England's seventeenth-century diplomats.

K. H. D. Haley's monograph covers the years of Temple's greatest triumph, the negotiation of the Triple Alliance of 1668 between England, the Netherlands and Sweden which halted Louis XIV's conquest of the Spanish Netherlands; and his greatest disaster, the Treaty of Dover between England and France in 1670 which led to the third Anglo-Dutch war in 1672. Through 1669 and well into 1670 Temple stayed on at The Hague, calmly negotiating with the Dutch Pensionary de Witt and the Spanish governor at Brussels for the consolidation and reinforcement of the Triple Alliance, while his masters in London, Charles II and Secretary Arlington, were conspiring to break it. It was a memorable humiliation.

Haley draws on a wide range of sources, some of them new, to provide a detailed analysis of the negotiations which led up to the Triple Alliance, beginning back in 1665, amending and in some instances superseding the late Sir Keith Feiling's standard account, now more than half a century old. But perhaps because of his concern with detail he is curiously evasive on certain basic questions; notably, how far was Temple really duped? and if he was, ought he to have been? (I grant that an unequivocal answer, yes or no, to such questions is probably impossible, but an informed opinion, even a guess, would be valuable.) De Witt himself clearly suspected the truth at an early stage, as Herbert Rowen made clear in his definitive biography of the great Pensionary (TLS, September 29, 1978). This is now re-issued in an abridged and completely re-written version; a welcome move, though it is daunting to see that it costs more than the original, which was four times the length.

It is worth comparing two key episodes as described by Haley and Rowen. In April 1669, de Witt learned from a Swedish source that England and France were secretly negotiating for an alliance. He taxed Temple with it, "as a friend, not a minister", and Temple replied that the King was "so deep in [the Triple Alliance], as well as the humour of the whole kingdom, that it was hard to think I could be deceived". But reporting the incident to Lord Keeper Bridgeman he wrote, "I looked innocent, and thereby as unconcerned as he did". Rowen remarks that his answer "may have honoured Temple as a friend, but it casts a strange light upon him as a diplomat". (The words "friend" and "diplomat" could well be exchanged.) Haley has no comment to make, except that Temple told Bridgeman he thought it was a French trick.

Eighteen months later, in September 1670, Temple was suddenly recalled to London. By now rumours of the Treaty of Dover, signed in June, could no longer be ignored, but in his farewell interview with de Witt Temple still assured him he "could not believe it was possible for any Crown ever to enter into any counsels as destructive to their honour and safety as these he [de Witt] suspected". Again Haley is silent; Rowen comments that Temple was "confusing personal honesty and diplomatic veracity", but he adds a quote which makes it clear that he did try to warn the Pensionary. If he came back, he said, de Witt would "know more"; if not, he would be able to "guess more". De Witt only smiled. Here and elsewhere it seems that the personal friendship between the two men, delicately established by Haley, was paradoxically an impediment to frankness.

Temple in fact remained in London, to bask for a while in the glory of being the architect of the "Triple League", even as Charles II was destroying it, and to consolidate his reputation as an authority on affairs Dutch with his best-selling *Observations upon the United Provinces*. His reaction to the frightful death of de Witt, torn to pieces by the Amsterdam mob in 1672 as the direct result of Anglo-French policy, is not recorded; but when that policy collapsed in 1674 he was free to return to The Hague. However, he declined to make the natural progression to a Secretaryship of State in 1677 and again in 1679. He tried to act as a kind of elder statesman during the Exclusion Crisis, but retired, frustrated as well as disgraced, in 1681.

It was a curiously inconclusive career, and there is an element of blandness, even evasiveness, in Temple which in Haley's case has communicated itself from subject to author. Did Macaulay have it right? He often did. Of Temple he remarks that he had "a temper not naturally good, but under strict command; a constant regard to decorum . . . a disposition to be content with small and certain winnings rather than go on doubling the stake". He admits that

He did not betray or oppress his country; nay, he rendered considerable services to her; but he risked nothing for her. . . . He never put himself prominently before the public eye, except at conjunctures when he was almost certain to gain, and could not possibly lose, at conjunctures when the interest of the State, the views of the Court, and the passions of the multitude, all appeared for an instant to co-incide . . . [and] when the favourable crisis was passed, he never risked the reputation he had won.

These are hard words, but there is nothing in Haley's account to gainsay them. However, the last sentence of his book carries a hint that a second instalment is to come, covering the rest of Temple's career, and this we will await with interest.

Doctors at sea

Roy Porter

HAROLD J. COOK
The Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London
310pp. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. \$32.95.
080141840 X

Not the least of the peculiarities of Britain has been the way in which the enormous strength and success of the Establishment has gone together with apparently rickety formal institutions. The bureaucracies and nobilities of Continental absolutisms were buttressed by privilege and prerogative, but in the event, Britain's more open, more ramshackle arrangements stood the test of time better. And the history of the professions further bears out this intriguing paradox, as Harold J. Cook's lucid analysis of the medical elites of Stuart London demonstrates.

For it would be hard to deny that by the early years of the eighteenth century, the leading lights among metropolitan physicians – men such as John Radcliffe, Richard Mead and Hans Sloane – were basking in unprecedented fame and fortune. Yet medicine's leading professional body, the Royal College of Physicians, whose statutes secured its members quasi-monopolistic powers in the metropolis, had slithered from crisis to crisis. Staunchly royalist under James I and Charles I, the College's Machiavellian volte-faces after 1642 left it somewhat embarrassed at the Restoration, when its expected recovery was further impeded by the leanings of Charles II and his courtiers towards the Royal Society. Soon after, plague in 1665 proved an unmitigated disaster (the luminaries of the College fled London, leaving the field open to rivals and enemies, and its valuables a target for theft), and worse followed in the fire of 1666, which destroyed the College's premises, with most of its library and collections.

Thereafter, only under James II could the College count on unambiguous royal backing for its efforts to uphold medical orthodoxy and a closed shop, and that support of course



"Sense of Taste", after Velázquez, is reproduced from Velázquez by Jonathan Brown (321pp. Yale University Press. £35. 0 300 03466 0), which will be reviewed shortly in the TLS.

speedily boomeranged. The eighteenth century dawned with a severe legal reverse, when in the Rose Case (1704) the House of Lords ruled in effect that the rival apothecaries need not restrict themselves to dispensing for the physicians but could themselves prescribe as general practitioners. For long thereafter, the College looked more like a private club than the mouthpiece of a liberal profession.

So why did the College of Physicians fare so indifferently under the Stuarts? Partly, as Cook ably documents, it was because the chief restrictive practice which formed the College's rationale was unrealistic. Its licence to practise physic in London was restricted to university graduates, its fellowship normally to Oxford or Cambridge MDs. But the effective demand for medical services in the mushrooming, unhealthy metropolis far outran what could be met by the College's fifty or so members. In any case, most of the sick could not meet their stiff fees. And so unlicensed practice inevitably flourished, among both regulars and quacks, who knew they could flout the College because, at bottom, their services were indispensable. Perhaps recognition of this elementary fact explains the half-heartedness with which the College's censors prosecuted illicitly practising interlopers.

Most subtly, the College lost out because, like today's trade unions, it failed to move with the times. So long as the best medicine indisputably remained Classical medicine, graven on sacred tablets, a body privileging humanist book-learning carried intellectual respect. But along came the New Science, experimentalism, anatomical discoveries and, not least, the promises of Helmontian chemistry. For a while, under the stimulus of Jonathan Goodard, George Ent and others during the Interregnum, the College looked set to incorporate change and become the nerve-centre of medical research. But these initiatives petered out, outgunned in part by the Royal Society. Instead, the College foolishly embroiled itself in civil war against the other branches of medicine and allowed itself to be outmanoeuvred in a diaphanous and doomed defence of the Ancients in a generation which increasingly embraced the Moderns. If Tho-

mas Sydenham's empiricism signalled medicine's progressive face, it is significant that he was not a fellow of the College.

Privileged corporations make enemies and will founder without effective central support, but this could never be relied upon. Although Christopher Hill has lined up the College with the Crown as bastions of reaction, Cook rightly shows that both court and medical politics were far more complex. In those eddying currents of patronage and faction, royal favour proved fickle. Most important of all, however, professional bodies can thrive only if they ensure the will of their members, and the College's dilemma – to put it in Hobbesian terms – was that it could never offer enough protection to command obedience. Too many late Stuart physicians did not identify their own fortune with a closed College, looking rather to the open market, to lay patronage, and to intellectual centres such as the Royal Society. The great age of medical free enterprise was dawning. "Physick lies a bleeding", judged Tom Brown, the wit. But he was wrong. Physick was thriving, but it was casting off its old skin.

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Tale of three nations

Brian Pullan

RICCARDO CALIMANI
Storia del Ghetto di Venezia.
399pp. Milan: Rusconi. L.5,000
88216120182

Father Felix Faber, the strict Dominican pilgrim who passed through Venice in the 1480s, complained that the cities of his native Germany were far readier to accommodate Jewish moneylenders than Christian monks. "Not so the lords of Venice, for they maintain no Jew, even in so great a city; they exclude no religious order; they restore ruined monasteries and build new ones." Venetian actions, over the next 130 years, would have disappointed him. Under stress of war, the city's rulers moved their Jewish bankers across the lagoon from discreet remoteness in Mestre to compulsory residence on the fringe of the city itself. Later they granted privileges to Jewish traders from Spain and Portugal who were heretics in the sight of the Church, because they had once lived as Christians in a strongly conformist country and were now permitted, in Venice, to desert Catholicism for the religion of their ancestors. The Venetians did not establish the

first segregated Jewish quarter in Europe, but they did, arguably, create the first one to be called a ghetto. They also became less generally tolerant of religious orders: they expelled for a time both the Barnabites and the Society of Jesus for alleged activities which threatened to subvert the state.

The Calimani were once famous among Venetian Jews. In the 1590s they wielded considerable local power through their control over the letting of houses. Fittingly, the Ghetto's most comprehensive historian bears their name. Riccardo Calimani's book is not just an account of the Ghetto as a physical entity, as a cluster of decrepit tenements and spacious synagogues within a moated, fortress-like enclosure. Nor is it solely the story of the Ghetto as a partially autonomous community, of the authority of its rabbis and secular chiefs. Rather, Calimani strives to present a total history of Venetian Jewish society and of its interpenetration with the Christian world outside it. In some contexts, the Jews formed three nations (Germano-Italian, Western and Eastern), in others a single, all-embracing corporation. Though concentrating on the Ghetto period, from 1516 to 1797, he also explores the distant origins of Venetian Jewry, and describes the lingering, sometimes hysterical, prejudices of the nineteenth century which in-

evitably survived the ceremonious burning of the Ghetto's gates. He interweaves potted biographies of leading figures, from the litigious Mendes sisters to the great rabbis and apologists, with accounts of the Venetian government's periodic negotiations with the Jewish communities – a form of domestic diplomacy intended to define their rights and duties, and to ensure that they benefited the economy without seriously competing with Venetian nobles and citizens. Much stress is laid on the controversies, concerning matters doctrinal, ceremonial, economic and social, which at intervals divided both the Jewish communities and their Christian hosts.

Calimani's work deserves to succeed the handy account of Venetian Jewry which Cecil Roth published over fifty years ago, though admittedly he lacks Roth's flair. The book is both accurate and well informed, except on matters incidental to the story, and its author takes advantage of the latest pronouncements of scholars. His bibliography contains 428 items, exactly 400 more than those which Roth listed with little enthusiasm. His narrative maintains a chronological flow over a long distance (an asset often missing from more original and analytical pieces). It conveys some sense of the relationship between certain minutely dissected episodes in the history of Venetian

Jewry, and presents them in much-needed perspective. Calimani provides a sensitive description of Leon Modena, the gambling rabbi who aspired to all knowledge, even of magic and heresy. He does well, too, with Giulio Morosini, the convert to Christianity who tried to rectify Leon's supposedly bawdier description of the rites of the Jews, and yet retained, despite his determination to hold them up to ridicule, an affectionate memory of some. But his tales of obscure persons arraigned before the Inquisition are too bald and artless, and fail to exploit to the full the splendid edition of the trial records now being published by Professor Ioly Zorattini of Udine. More hard evidence is needed about such matters as intermarriage between members of the three resident Jewish nations.

The bibliography might well have included Simonsfeld's two volumes on the German merchants, published in 1887, and containing further useful information on the etymology of the word "ghetto". Officials known as the *domini a getto* figure in one of Simonsfeld's documents, of 1368. They are not lords over the Jews; they are refusing part of a consignment of copper destined for a foundry. A foundry would later give its name to the quarter in which, for almost four centuries, the Jews would be compelled to live.

he appealed to Pope Calixtus III. The following year the Roman curia pronounced that no valid marriage between Giovanni and Lusanna had taken place. The Roman court, Professor Brucker suggests, was more likely than that of the austere, saintly (and comparatively low-born) Archbishop Antonino of Florence to be open to the blandishments of the Florentine banking establishment and, in particular, to those of the Pope's banker, Cosimo de' Medici, to whose faction the Della Casa belonged. If politics – though here there is no hard evidence, merely a balance of probability – determined the final outcome it is not inconceivable that Lusanna, too, may in the beginning have been aided in bringing her action by those seeking to discredit the Medici through the Della Casa supporters. However this may be, it was to be Giovanni and Marietta who lived happily ever after. From this point the very remarkable, strong-minded Lusanna disappears from historical records and so from history. Until, that is, she is brought back to life in the pages of this lively and learned book.

The decision of the archiepiscopal court was that Giovanni and Lusanna had been lawfully married. Giovanni was ordered to return to her "with marital affection" and was fined heavily for what was declared to be his bigamous union with Marietta Rucellai. Against the judgment

daughter of the powerful Rucellai family. His lawyers countered by claiming that although Lusanna had been the mistress of their client for some twelve years – that is to say even before the death of her first husband – no marriage had taken place. Was it likely that he, young, handsome, rich, and of distinguished family, could even think of marrying one who was old (he was thirty-five at the time); she, it seems about the same age), immoral, sterile, and of inferior social condition: "to the grave dishonour of himself and his family?" At the same time (as a diversionary and intimidatory tactic) an accusation, that Lusanna had poisoned her first husband, was brought in the secular court of the city. This case, however, after decisive threats from the Archbishop of Florence, who was concerned that ecclesiastical jurisdiction might be prejudiced by the intervention of a lay court, failed to go ahead.

From the evidence of the thirty-one witnesses – among whom were marriage-brokers, peasants, servants, cloth-workers, shopkeepers, and their wives – Gene Brucker teases out

weeks of inconsequential remorse in 1497).

Professor Hallman's book is thus in part an analysis of financial "abuses", mostly concerning the tenure of ecclesiastical benefices, but it is also an ambitious plunge into socio-historical explanation, or about nepotism in the most extended sense. With reference to pluralities we learn that there were some changes; the edict of Paul III in 1547 did succeed in limiting cardinals to only one bishopric together with a title church in Rome, but monasteries and lesser benefices were not covered by the restriction, and many devices, some ancient, some more recent, persisted, such as reservations, rights of regress, pensions, benefice renting and the sale of income-bearing honours and administrative posts. Even would-be reformers such as Alessandro, Sadoletto and Gian Pietro Carafa rented out their benefices; they too had to have sufficient income to live in a certain style. Some important points are made towards understanding the conception of a benefice as a source of income rather than a sacred office; there were conscientious claims of status, family duty and benevolence towards dependants to be set against simple apostolic precepts.

Even more might have been said: after all, the benefice holder might appoint a competent suffragan, vicar or chaplain and thus convince himself that, while using most of the income for other purposes which he considered compatible with the broader interests of the Church, he was not spiritually negligent. But Hallman takes the reader much further. She sees the commanding heights of the Catholic Church becoming virtually one big family business with

the Pope as its Godfather. She argues that most of her Italian cardinals – the vast majority of the Sacred College – were drawn from the "older ruling classes" of the various states and regions of Italy (though after 1540 "new men" were slightly gaining in number), and that three-quarters of them were related by marriage or affinity either in their life-times or posthumously. Popes set the pace in even providing dowries and pensions to female relatives from the funds of the Apostolic Chamber; the austere Paul IV's hand-outs to the Carafa family were on a large scale, though his successor Pius IV enriched his family with nearly ten times as much.

At one point Hallman acknowledges that she is more concerned to indicate "trends" than "absolute". While she has certainly raised some interesting questions, much of what she writes has to be taken on trust, and depends more on her methods of quantification than on verifiable data. The citation of sources (perhaps to save printing costs?) is often minimal, giving little clue as to textual content. Extensive use has been made of the minutes of papal briefs and of camera mandata, and many printed sources (both primary and secondary) have been cited; but even so the selection often seems random or tendentious; much groundwork is still necessary in the coverage of a subject so large. Admittedly, the analytical apparatus is awesome. Nearly fifty tables and diagrams are provided: they include; tucked into a pocket at the back of the book, a "kinship chart" linking popes and cardinals, but this weird, spidery polyhedron is of no use at all except as a visual curiosity.

One ends convinced that reliability and readability would have been better preserved in the core of such a study had been a monograph on an individual cardinal who lived through this period. An ideal subject might have been Ercole Gonzaga (one of the "old ruling class" and more "lettered" than "legalistic" in educational background according to Hallman's criteria), who faced all the conflicting claims of family piety, reforming initiatives and a high-income style of living, who played an active role in his own diocese and at the Council of Trent, and nearly became pope.

Timothy Davies's *Famiglie feudali siciliene patrimoni redditivi investimenti tra '500 e '600* (232pp. Caltanissetta/Rome: Salvatore Scacchia. L20,000) is the twenty-seventh volume in the *Unione delle Camere di Commercio di Industria Artigianato ed Agricoltura della Regione Siciliana's* series "Storia economica di Sicilia: testi e ricerche". Davies looks at social and economic aspects of the lives of five Sicilian aristocratic families – the Grimaldi di Santa Caterina, the Giardini di Santa Nina, the Barresi di Alessandria, the Di Napoli di Resuttano and Campobello and the Branconi di Leonforte – during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Particular attention is paid to advancement obtained through satisfactory alliances; original documents pertaining to marriage settlements and dowries are examined and Davies has also reconstructed the families' agricultural policy, production and financial transactions through bills of sale for barley, wool, cheese, wine, cattle and sheep.

Taking liberties

Hugh Brogan

LEONARD W. LEVY
Emergence of a Free Press
383pp. Oxford University Press. £34.
0195035062

From time to time historical monographs appear which compel the reader into vigorous thought, to the great benefit of his mental health. Such a one is Leonard W. Levy's treatise on freedom of the press in eighteenth-century America, a substantially revised and lengthened version of a book he wrote twenty-six years ago, *Legacy of Suppression*. Professor Levy writes with scrupulous clarity and intelligence, only occasionally betraying himself into unintelligibility by a slip of the pen; it would be quite wrong to call his book heavy going; but it requires a constantly alert attention. The rewards of such attention are great. By the last page even those who were beforehand quite clear in their minds about what they meant by freedom of the press and why they supported it will have had a useful refresher course. The rest of us will be masters of the subject for the first time and will probably feel the benefit for the rest of our lives. Levy has thus done us no small service.

The main points that he brings out are two. First, that there are no ways of suppressing unpleasant, unnecessary utterances without suppressing unpleasant, necessary ones; second, that very few friends of press freedom are to be trusted once they get their hands on power. Thus, in the middle of the eighteenth century Parliament and the colonial assemblies vied with each other in punishing what they held to be seditious libels of themselves; yet had they listened to their critics, and tried to answer them, the violent break-up of the British Empire might have been avoided. And the critics of the empire, as they turned into revolutionaries, were vociferous defenders of freedom of speech and of the press; but once they had seized control of the governments in America they eagerly harried individuals and papers, in the name of liberty. And to this day, many politicians in their hearts consider that all criticism of their deeds and policies is unfair, and would suppress it if they dared.

Emergence of a Free Press is highly controversial, in the strict sense: one of its less agreeable features is the author's running war in his footnotes against scholars who have dared to disagree with him. But the controversy will be of little interest to most British readers, since it amounts to no more than a dispute about the meaning that the free-press guarantee of the First Amendment to the Con-

stitution had for its framers. In the past liberals such as the late Mr Justice Black held that the words "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press" had always meant, and been construed to mean, that no one was ever to be punished for seditious libel in the United States: that is, for uttering or publishing words of disrespect, criticism or abuse of the government. Levy argues, I think correctly, that the full libertarian position was not articulated before the dispute about the Sedition Act of 1798 and not fully adopted as constitutional law until well into the nineteenth century. The dispute will be fascinating to any student of American history (not least because the story adds greatly to one's esteem for James Madison and diminishes respect for Thomas Jefferson); but it has much less significance than Levy's careful account of his main theme, accurately expressed in his title.

He utters one caution before getting to work: this is a history of law, not of newspapers. Both in England and America journalists behaved as if they were free to say what they pleased (and very scurrilous much of it was) long before the law formally allowed them so much liberty. Levy is puzzled by the anomaly, but it is not his concern to explore it. What he does, very successfully, is to show how the definition of press freedom was slowly enlarged from the end of the seventeenth century onwards. The first struggle was to get rid of the censor and prior restraint; once that had been achieved it was necessary to demolish Blackstone's doctrine that though a man was free to publish what he liked, he could be severely punished if what he published was injurious to government (and practically any expression of hostile opinion might be deemed injurious). Not the least fascination of this book is its depiction of the different ways in which British and American lawyers tackled the job, using very different methods to arrive, by the mid-nineteenth century, at much the same position, the one we enjoy today – which Levy holds is still not libertarian enough.

A British reader, thinking of the Official Secrets Act, can only agree. But the relevance of the book to Britain lies less in what it says about seditious libel than in what it implies about the offence of blasphemous libel, so shockingly revived a few years ago in the *Gay News* case, or that of obscene libel, which seems to underlie the current dispute about the Churchill Bill. The impulse to stamp out disquieting thoughts lies behind all these concepts, and must be resisted in every manifestation. *Emergence of a Free Press* will greatly strengthen the will and courage of every libertarian, sufficient reason for wishing it a wide readership.

Mirror images

Paul Barker

JOHN PILGER
Heroes
591pp. Cape. £12.95.
0224 023012

The journalist as hero has a long history by now. In this collection of episodes from twenty years' writing, John Pilger sees himself in the line of descent from W. F. Russell, *The Times*' man in the Crimea, and Martha Gellhorn, reporting from the Spanish Civil War. Some of the strongest set-pieces here are indeed dispatches from war: America's betrayal of Saigon, the ideological horrors of Cambodia. But, unlike Russell and Gellhorn, Pilger is a journalist of the television age – as well-known, perhaps, for his TV documentaries as for his newspaper work. Popular journalism was, even before television, closely linked with the rise of the press photographer. And Pilger's own photographs are here too: clear, strong, unambiguous.

In practice, of course, there are problems about keeping ambiguity at bay. There is a short, angry report on the 1984-5 miners' strike – which only maintains its sharp focus by not bringing Arthur Scargill into the lens once. Pilger writes (very convincingly) about the Australia he grew up in and the contempt this bred in him for everything to do with effete

England – but he is soon off to London, to seek fame in Boris Court and the flamboyant, best-selling *Mirror* of Cecil King and Hugh Cudlipp.

This collection grew, apparently, from the idea that he should build a book around a specific mining community in Durham that he had reported on. But that has shrunk to a small piece in the jigsaw of Pilger's working life. The end result has the drawbacks of much collected journalism. He guides us in and out of Bangladesh, Czechoslovakia, South Africa. The journalist makes his excuses and leaves – however deeply he feels about what he is reporting on. "I had merely come and gone", Pilger says, acknowledging this dilemma after meeting dissidents secretly in Prague. "I could not tell myself that they would be all right, because in all probability they would not be all right and, anyway, I would not know . . ."

But some remarkable reporting is reprinted here. The best is often in the lowest key, and at an angle to the main conflict. The Ruckers, in Appalachia, have lost their only son in Vietnam – but they have his framed decorations to remember him by. In a Cape Town court room, an Afrikaner family plead desperately to keep their classification as white, despite the Negroid features of their youngest child.

Heroes is very revealing about the techniques, and the psychological drive, behind popular journalism. But it also, to John Pilger's credit, contains some memorable snapshots of a harsh world.

OK addresses

Christopher Hitchens

ALISTAIR COOKE
The Patient Has the Floor
205pp. Bodley Head. £9.95.
0307 301641

The man depicted on the jacket of this book does actually look rather like a country or family doctor. The cheerful, reassuring features; the vaguely tweedy cut of the jib; the hint of a twinkle in the eye – all of these set in the context of a leather armchair. This upholstery proves upon inspection to be the very throne from which Alistair Cooke introduces *Masterpiece Theatre* – that golden treasury of Englishness with which Mobil Oil lends tone to its corporate image.

Does this affable picture conceal a bluff interior? Cooke here reprints his public addresses to various professional associations. No Fink-Nottle he; the platform holds no terrors. Indeed, he shows a nice mastery of the techniques and a nice judgment, of the special interests and capacities of his auditors. After his address to the Mayo Clinic convention in 1965, a good proportion of Cooke's invitations came from what he would probably call the medical fraternity, and it is this theme that gives the book its title.

Many, many Americans would cheerfully give their wrongly diagnosed right arms for a chance to speak just once to a convention of physicians. And most of them, having had their say, would not expect to be invited back. This is an enjoyable and agreeable book – the word "agreeable", indeed, would sum it up entirely – but it never ventures far beyond the bland.

At times there is a whiff almost of Denis Thatcher – "We have come to expect so much from you that I myself hope to be alive to hear of the implanting of the brain of a statesman in the cranium of a politician." And, at other times, a whiff of the midnight oil – "a bombard-

ment of applause that has not been equalled since, I dare say, by Cobden or John Bright or Lloyd George, or even by the Beatles."

Cook is a dab hand at the apposite quotation, and has a fund of anecdotes. He also knows America very well, and has a civilized and relaxed approach to life. If it should ever occur to him to evoke real mirth or real tears, he could probably do it. But he sticks to the measured and the consensual, which means that he often overbalances into bufferdom, as in this example from an address to the National Trust in Miami. He had quoted Clive Bell (typically by saying, "I think it was Clive Bell . . .") as calling for works of art that preserved "a valuable state of mind":

That's what we tense college boys dashed around looking for, although it got to be difficult for a young man to keep his eye on the subject. There were times when such a finished product as a beautifully designed young woman looked more like a valuable state of mind than, say, a commode.

No doubt.

The best of these reprints is "Staying Alive in 1776", which was given before the College of Physicians in Philadelphia. Here we have Cooke handling detail and analogy and science and history and, which is the trick, making it look easy. But even here comes that dreaded self-effacement which makes Cooke say, "My aim is no more, but no less, than what I take to be at all times the first concern of the historian: to try to revive the actual life of a time, to say as clearly as possible the way things probably were." Yes, yes, get on with it. And even with the addition of the "probably", it's still good old Leopold von Ranke.

The hazard of modest laymanship is that sooner or later you will be taken up on one of your disclaimers. Cooke records being told by Stephen Potter, "The trouble is that taking an honorary degree is rather like being knighted. It stamps you forever as an OK chap." The same risk attends the honoured guest speaker at the American convention.

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S. Schoenbaum

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 449pp. Pavilion/Michael Joseph. £12.95.
 185450076

A headline in the *New York Times* for December 16, 1966 (cited by Richard Schickel), read "Walt Disney, 65, Dies on Coast: Founded an Empire on a Mouse". Indeed he had. Accounts differ, but it seems that inspiration for the rodent came to Disney while crossing the Mississippi on a westbound train from New York. From the first, however, the animation was the work of the inarticulate Ub Iwerks, a colleague from Disney's pre-Hollywood days. Iwerks was actually given screen credit in the first Mickey Mouse cartoons – with a generosity for which Uncle Walt was not to be celebrated – but Mickey's high-pitched voice on the soundtrack remained Disney's.

The empire continued to grow. Minnie Mouse went the way of indifference and sexism, but Goofy, Pluto and Donald Duck became popular members of the extended cartoon family. The duck still lives, not least vigorously in the United States on the labels of the orange-juice containers which bear his name, and the empire has produced numerous other lucrative spin-offs: watches, sheet music, phonograph records, T-shirts, simulated coonskin caps (inspired by *Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier*, a Disney feature film) – all manner of things. Raised in Kansas, unbookish and under-educated, visually rather than verbally imaginative, Disney was a hard-working Middle-American, entrepreneurial visionary who gave – and still gives – pleasure to heterogeneous millions.

Recognition came early. Mickey Mouse was only four years old when Disney, visiting Washington, felt confident enough to try to arrange a private interview with General Pershing – "everything a man should be", Disney thought – whose son he had once chauffeured in France during the First World War. But the General was otherwise occupied, and Disney's press agent offered President Hoover instead. According to Schickel, Disney declined, and settled instead for an autographed copy of Pershing's memoirs. Leonard Mosley, however,

seems to imply that the meeting with Hoover took place. Disney afterwards laughing, "It sure restores your sense of American values". But how could Mosley know that Disney said this? His book, although equipped with prefatory acknowledgements, is devoid of real documentation, yet includes purportedly verbatim transcriptions of conversations, some of them held over half a century ago, which he could not have witnessed. Occasionally, although not very frequently, the reported dialogue affords some amusement. Thus, Louis B. Mayer, offered a chance to finance a ninety-minute cartoon feature about Snow White, scoffs, "Who'd pay to see a drawing of a fairy princess when they can watch Joan Crawford's

devotes just short of a column to "Mickey Mouse", defined as "Frequently (esp. in U.S.) designating something small, insignificant, or worthless". Yet the real Mickey Mouse was no such thing. Clever, cheeky and mischievous, he pursued his cartoon antics from the Sahara to the South Seas, as the world applauded. On the eve of war the League of Nations, meeting in Paris, honoured him as "an international symbol of good will". Travelling on to Rome, the Disney entourage had a private audience with the Pope and an interview with Mussolini, a Mouse fan. The propaganda machine of Dr Goebbels – known throughout Germany, according to Sinclair Lewis, as "Wotan's Mickey Mouse" – took a dim view of "Michael



Ascribed by Peter Ellenshaw for a scene in *Mary Poppins*, reproduced from *The Real Walt Disney* by Leonard Mosley, reviewed here.

boobs for the same price at the box-office?" Vintage Mayer – but did he say it?

The Real Walt Disney is a pop biography, embracing fictional techniques, of an authentic – if imperfect – American hero, and is not intended to dislodge cherished associations. Yet the real Disney had little use for blacks, Jews, homosexuals, communists, fellow travellers, union organizers, or women who were less than pure. Extreme right-wing causes – notably the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals – won his endorsement. John Wayne was his hero; had Disney not been done in by cigarettes – he smoked as many as three and a half packs a day – he would no doubt have today been a Rambo enthusiast.

Disney gave a new term to the language. The *Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary*

Maus", however, as Disney ruefully noted in a magazine article in 1933: "Mr A. Hitler, the Nazi old thing, says Mickey's silly. Imagine that!" But never mind. "Mr King George and Mrs Queen Mary gave him a right royal welcome; while Mr President F. Roosevelt and family have lots of Mickey in them, too." Disney was then only in his early thirties, but his political horizons would never extend much beyond Kansas City and Hollywood. At his house in Holmby Hills he presided over his ice-cream parlour and, in the garden, over a large model train. The Norman Rockwell dream of turn-of-the-century small-town America still lived.

The Real Walt Disney is Mosley's twentieth book: five novels, biographies of among others Lindbergh, Goering, Hirohito, Haile Selassie and Zanuck ("Hollywood's Last

Tycoon"). Formerly a London-based film critic for the *Daily Express*, Mosley is also an ex-Hollywood script-writer now living in Florida, the home of Disney World. So he has the right credentials. Yet *The Real Walt Disney* offers little of any critical interest about Disney entertainments, and is written in a shambling Anglo-American prose not inclined to much redundancy ("fully and completely", "she also had to be sympathetic too"). Nor are readers expected to know much: Rowlandson is identified as "the English cartoonist", Prokofiev as "the Russian composer".

The subject receives far more adroit treatment in Schickel's *The Disney Version*, an exercise in sympathetic revisionism, well received when it appeared only a few years after the master's death, and now reissued with corrections, updated statistics, and – most important – a substantial additional chapter on "Disney without Walt", bringing the story up to date. Schickel touches informatively on the recent live-action feature films – *The Black Hole*, which tried, unsuccessfully, to cash in on the *Star Wars* vogue; and *The Watcher in the Woods*, in which Bette Davis was wheeled out, also unsuccessfully, for a horrifically supernatural psychosexual potboiler. Hardly the Disney family entertainment of yore, but then, family entertainment has changed too. Then there was *TRON*, with its computer graphics special effects, but the big draw was *Splash*, about a mermaid that falls in love with a mortal.

Schickel also fills us in on the fate of EPCOT, the acronym for the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow: with a completely controlled climate, hunger and disease eliminated and all waste usefully recycled. As realized by WED (Walter Elias Disney) Enterprises, EPCOT, erected on reclaimed Florida swampland at a cost of almost \$60 million dollars, represents a Madison Avenue ad-man's fantasy come true: two concentric circles of pavilions featuring the latest wares of corporate America, displayed for visitors willing to pay to see advertising. Not surprisingly, Disney's inheritors have lacked his vision. Although Disney's remains were cremated and placed in a canister at Forest Lawn Memorial Park, there are (according to Mosley) those who believe that they were actually deposited in a deep freeze in California, to be thawed out for Walt's second coming. From the way things have been going lately, that won't be a moment too soon.

related but less familiar gay and lesbian view of film. Julia Lesage again (she is a co-editor of the magazine), Richard Dyer and Michele Citron provide some idea of the kind of thought to be desirable by gays and lesbians – a cinema free of misrepresentation, which offers them "positive images" with which to identify. But, as Dyer admits, this hardly constitutes an adequate approach to the analysis of film production and consumption, much less to the vexed issue of its mediation of ideology. Even more limited are the assumptions underlying the concluding essays on "Radical Third World Cinema", which suffer from a similar tendency towards resentful reductionism – attacking Western films and film-makers for consistently misportraying Third World peoples as oppressed and pathetic and detailed studies of the remarkable new cinema of countries like Hong Kong, Senegal or Cuba. It is only by the process of simplifications of history and cultural analysis that "Third World Cinema" can be generalized about (one contributor refers to this phenomenon as "anti-disco, anti-commercial and pro-reality") and so it is with some relief that one arrives at Teshome Gabriel's short study of a single example, the Senegalese filmmaker Ousmane Sembène's popular political satire *Kala* (1974). Avoiding at least some of his colleagues' facile remarks about the "black" and style of Third World cinema, Gabriel shows how one distinguished Third World film-maker managed to create a political cinema which, while embedded in its own specific culture, also transcended that culture by the richness and breadth of its appeal.

The world he was

Michael Hofmann

MARY JARRELL (Editor)
Randall Jarrell's Letters: An autobiographical and literary selection
 540pp. Faber. £25.
 0571 13829 2

Externally anyway, Randall Jarrell's life was less fraught, less eventful, than the lives of some of his contemporaries. In 1935, when these letters begin, he was twenty-one, a brilliant student of psychology at Vanderbilt, and just beginning to publish poems and reviews under the admiring eyes of Allen Tate and Robert Penn Warren. He followed John Crowe Ransom to Kenyon, where he roomed with Robert Lowell and Peter Taylor (both firm friends for life). His first teaching job was at Austin, where he also met his first wife Mackie. He spent the war training and teaching (and receiving photographs of his cat) at various airfields. After a year as literary editor of the *Nation* in 1946, he spent the rest of his life teaching at the Woman's College of North Carolina, at Greensboro – with sabbatical years in Princeton and Washington, DC. He married Mary Von Schrader, his second wife, in 1952. His death in 1965, when he was hit by a car, was thought to have been suicide by those who were so minded (like John Berryman); Mary Jarrell believes it to have been accidental, as the coroner did.

The letters are as attractive as Jarrell's celebrated reviews and as the poems in his last, best book, *The Lost World*. What they share is quickness and agility of mind, an unlikely grace, forthrightness without coarseness, a magnetic attraction towards goodness and love of life. All these go into the characteristic Jarrell tone, and it seems as wicked to call the poems infantile as to find the reviews malicious. "Hope" begins:

To prefer the nest in the linden
 By Apartment Eleven, the Shoreham

Arms, to Apartment Eleven
 Would be childish. But we are children.

The much-borrowed note on Oscar Williams begins: "Oscar Williams's new book is pleasant and a little quieter than his old, which gave the impression of having been written on a typewriter by a typewriter." They are recognizably by the same hand: the bold repetitions, the serious, unreasoning tone, the surprising, imaginative, inescapable conclusions. And yet they are not "professionally surprising in the way that, say, Mistinguette's legs are" (Jarrell on E. E. Cummings). It is the careful, faithful movement of a rare and particular spirit.

The letters are full of Jarrellisms: expressions of excitement like "Gee!" or "crazy about", and of rejection, like "dumb" or "dopey". There are his imaginative conceits, acute and slightly florid: a vintage bottle of *Spülsee* "like a raisin's day-dream", his loneliness at Princeton, "If I had a lion I'd be just like St Jerome." His prodigious cultural range is a source of more mirth and peculiarity: "One sees lots of criticism by William Carlos Williams these days, but very little by Baby Snooks; it's an unjust world." (Mary Jarrell explains who Baby Snooks was.) Or he is reminded of a sentence of Emerson's:

"Today I saw two snakes gliding back and forth in the sunlight – not to eat, not for love, just gliding." Someone faced that for an epigraph for a novel about Harvard.

This is varied in another letter, describing a faculty do: "No word of interest was said, so I ate quite a bit. So you see: no love, no gliding, just to eat." There are innumerable occasions in these letters of such motiveless joy in expression; as we saw, even Oscar Williams could serve as one. How could anyone be accounted malicious who was capable of ending a review: "And now I have so little space, and so much enthusiasm, for Adrienne Cecile Rich's *The Diamond Cutters* that I can only make boiling and whistling noises like a teakettle?" At times, Jarrell thought writing reviews was

as futile as raining into the sea: it remained as salty as ever. Perhaps it was even worse than that, it made the waves reach for the sky: Oscar Williams retaliated for his review by leaving Jarrell out of his anthologies, even removing him from reprinted editions. For Jarrell, though, it was always the expression of enthusiasm that was most important, and this is carried on just as much in the letters as in the reviews. There are detailed considerations of their poems addressed to Lowell, Elizabeth Bishop and Adrienne Rich, as well as the far more rapid and generalized promulgation of preferences to other correspondents. He gave a page-long reading-list to an Austrian friend. He found himself defending Robert Lowell to a Sister Bernette Quinn, who preferred Jarrell's own work. If by now his modern canon – Frost, Stevens, Williams, Moore, Bishop, Lowell – seems classically obvious and unarguable, it is worth hearing in mind that it wasn't at the time, that the sea really was salty. Mary Jarrell's short footnotes bring this out rather more than her husband's letters; he was, as he says himself, "cheerful and determined" in them. She, though, is free to point out that an anthologist "chose neither wisely nor too well", or to inform us that "The year Jarrell nominated Bishop, the Poetry Society of America prize went to Joyce Kilmer."

As a correspondent or a confidante, Jarrell is wonderfully bracing: staunch, exuberant, witty and serious. He has the gift of being genuine, without being dull or lavish or incredible. Mary Jarrell quotes Robert Lowell: "Randall was the only man I have ever met who could make other writers feel that their work was more important to him than his own. . . . What he did was to make others feel that their realizing themselves was as close to him as his own self-realization, and that he cared as much about making the nature and goodness of someone else's work understood as he cared about making his own understood."

He none the less kept his independence, rejecting, for instance, Lowell's prose-memoir "91 Revere Street". ("What's wrong with it?" And

Jarrell said, "But it's not poetry, Cal.") He could be impatient and intolerant, but never immodest. His own notes for his *Selected Poems* explain – to an American audience – what a "blind date" is, and what it is to be "stood up". Perhaps the best way of appreciating what Jarrell stood for is to understand what he found regrettable or impermissible:

I think they ought to say "What shall it profit a man if he gain his own soul and lose the whole world?" and give that to people along with the other.

He objected to some of Allen Tate's poetry on the grounds of "lack of charm, feeling, tone of forbidding authority". He wrote of R. P. Blackmur: "He's a queer man: if he traded a little intelligence for a little goodness or sweetness he'd certainly be better off." In an early letter to Allen Tate – but then, charmingly, he hardly seems to have changed at all as he grew older – he wrote: "I think all in all I've got a poetic and semifeminine mind. I don't put any real faith in abstractions or systems." It is a mind of rare responsiveness and tenderness, capable of detecting Auden in the work of his contemporaries, even when absorbed indirectly, and at very low concentrations; and of worrying at a sight or sound or taste in a poem, even if it means overturning a whole life to find it:

This spoonful of chocolate tapioca
 Tastes like – like peanut butter, like the vanilla
 Extract Mama told me not to drink.
 Swallowing the spoonful, I have already travelled
 Through time to my childhood. It puzzles me
 That age is like it.

In dedicating this book to her husband and his generation, some alive, mostly dead, Mary Jarrell quotes two lines from one of his poems: "For all we said, and did, and thought – / The world we were", omitting the line preceding, "There is no one left to care". In the event, she is right, and he is wrong. It is impossible not to care for that lost "world we were", so vividly brought to life in these letters, beautifully edited to constitute a mixture of biography, autobiography and group portrait.

Subversions and simplifications

Dennis Walder

PETER STEVEN (Editor)
Jump Cut: Hollywood, politics and counter-cinema
 400pp. British Film Institute. £9.95.
 0919946 542

A "jump cut" is a technical film-term for an abrupt transition between shots which jars the viewer's sense of the continuity of time and space. It is most familiar in the work of Jean-Luc Godard, who has used jump cuts since *A bout de souffle* (1960) to disorientate conventional audience expectations. *Jump Cut* is also the name of a film magazine founded in Chicago and Berkeley in 1974, with the aim of providing a "subversive counterpoint" to mainstream (that is, Hollywood) film culture. Peter Steven has brought together twenty-five articles culled from the first ten years of *Jump Cut*'s life, in order to expose the magazine's radical best to the "much larger audience" (*Jump Cut*'s print run is 6,000) which, he believes, exists for "political criticism of the cinema".

Steven's book is organized in five parts, each of which contains five essays representing an important aspect of *Jump Cut*'s approach, which may be characterized as American New Left – broadly socialist, feminist and anti-racist. Unusually for serious film criticism, the contributions are generally punchy, jargon-free and unpatronizing. While the manners and modes of the dominant cinema of Hollywood

inevitably receive most attention, this is done without any easy dismissal of the role of popular entertainment in society. But, overall, the quality of the collection is uneven.

In Part One, which is explicitly on Hollywood, two essays – Charles Eckert's "Shirley Temple and the House of Rockefeller" and Jane Feuer's "Hollywood Musicals" – succinctly suggest the subversive potential of relating image and ideology. Brevity has its drawbacks, however: Feuer's account of the processes whereby *Singin' in the Rain* and *On the Town* make mass entertainment appear as folk entertainment (through the "spontaneous" use of props-at-hand, for example), while suppressing the mode of production of musicals and their links with industrial capitalism, is persuasive as far as it goes – which is not very far. Musicals as a genre have a much more ambivalent relationship with society than this implies, often undermining the very structure they appear to be supporting. As Feuer points out, Judy Garland's performance in *Meet Me in St. Louis* supports the dominant "folksiness" of the film by her brilliant impersonation of the amateur performer; what Feuer misses is that the film's surface celebration of small-town America is contradicted by Garland's father's decision to take his family and dependants to New York to advance his career – thus suddenly making their invisible means of support disturbingly apparent.

Such complexities may well require a different format for proper elaboration. Steven's *Jump Cut*, however, offers the less well thought-out yet nevertheless challenging review-article, such as Linda Gordon's account

of the documentary *Union Maids* (1976) in the section on "Independent Filmmaking in North America". Gordon approves of the film's role in "the optimistic tradition of Socialist realism", but she slides over the questions it raises about the women's actual political affiliations – all of them Communists, yet merely "radical" according to the commentary. More searching and provocative is Julia Lesage's analysis of D. W. Griffith's classic *Broken Blossoms* (1919). Her essay is the outstanding contribution in the section on "Women's Counter-Cinema" and indeed of the entire anthology. *Broken Blossoms* was conceived as a liberal, progressive statement against masculine brutality and racial prejudice, quite deliberately made to counter the scandal Griffith aroused with his epic *Birth of a Nation* in which the Ku Klux Klan was depicted as a paternalistic organization which brought order to the South. In the more domestic, intimate world of *Broken Blossoms*, a chaste and idealized love affair between an immigrant Chinese man and a young white girl (Lillian Gish), whose father is a working-class rough, is used to suggest the inequities of popular racial and sexual attitudes. But, as Lesage convincingly argues, this surface opposition towards prevailing stereotypes, while seductively effective, also masks a hidden narrative of male desire for the child-virgin. In visual and compositional terms, both the brutish father (who eventually kills his daughter) and her "lover" and the gentle Chinaman "rape" the girl.

The feminist perspective is strongly present in *Jump Cut*, and most of the authors seem influenced by it, especially those writing on

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Remainders

Eric Korn

Borges and me

The trick, of course, is not to try and sound like him: there is an imitable Borges, and it would not be hard to manage his deep notes without his depths, like a monkey playing the double-buss.

I had been reading Borges for some years, even from the days when it was still chic to enjoy him. I didn't know much about the man, like how he pronounced his name or — perhaps — what he was getting at. I'd heard he had some kind of eye trouble and that was a pity. Nevertheless, I was ready to do reverence.

I had a reverence too for Philip Henry Gosse, father to Edmund and brother to Plymouth, was intrigued, as is every chop-logic, by *Onphalos*, that late triumph of scholasticism, a work of unexpected warmth and fair-mindedness in which an honest creationist confronts the lessons of geology. There could be no doubt, for Gosse, that the geological and the fossil evidence pointed to the great antiquity and slow processes of the world; equally, or perhaps unequally, there could be no doubt that the world had been made in seven twenty-four-hour days, for the Bible said so, and the Bible bore God's own affidavit. But the world had been created perfect, and perfection demanded a past; fossils were not the "gigantic and superfluous lies in the rocks" that Gosse's appalled friend Kingsley thought he had described, but necessary and lovely traces of the intrusion of time into Eternity. God, it seemed, had started the film of History in the middle: but in pre-entropic Victorian physics history was a causal chain extending forwards and backwards to infinity: wherever you started watching would seem like the middle. (All the more so if the history film was a film-loop. Gosse's own metaphor was a wind-up toy set going by a street-showman on its circular path.)

I was new to the book-trade then, and I thought that *Onphalos* (the name refers to Adam's navel, another sort of fossil) was a common book, for I had found two copies on two successive days. Later I found it was relatively rare; later still I found it was no rarer than such misleading coincidences. But the book had sold badly and had been bound up from the sheets as needed in job lots of fifty or so at a time, bound in a variety of colours and patterns of cloth; one of my copies was a true first issue, and that genuinely was rare. The other was bound in a prize calf; pretty but of no merit to the punctilious collector. Two copies of an obscure book seemed excessive. "Send one to Borges," suggested a friend and showed me the essay on *Onphalos* written in 1941 and published in *Otras Inquisiciones*; Borges, naturally, had been fascinated by this perfect and doomed thesis, but knew the book only from the accounts of Edmund Gosse and H.G. Wells, for he could find it in no library in Argentina. I was too shy or too mean to do so, but later that year Borges came and gave a series of readings in London, in Westminster I think, ringmastered by Norman Thomas di Giovanni, to attentive spell-bound audiences. I attended. I was spell-bound. (Actually I thought he was a little slow, a little simple; but I assured myself that such simplicity lay beyond cleverness.)

To the last of the lectures I brought a copy of *Onphalos*, carefully wrapped. After some thought I had decided that I could not afford to give away the better copy; after rather more thought I slipped my business card, as if by inadvertence, into the book, but did not inscribe it. A note of acknowledgement would be something I could treasure. It would also be a commodity.

After the lecture I jostled and coaxed my way to the speaker; Norman Thomas di Giovanni granted me an audience, I explained my errand, unwrapped my gift as I was asked, put it in Borges's fumbling hands, realized two things: he was more profoundly blind than I had obliquely guessed; and I had accidentally brought him my precious first issue, though Borges, holding it graciously but upside-down, would presumably never know this. He seemed moved; I was blinded.

But still I was mildly disappointed, over the next few months, not to get some acknowledgement from the punctilious

Borges. Only at this moment do I realize why. I had, of course, put my card in the other copy (now in the History of Science Library of a Midwestern State University); a small, merciful miracle, unobserved, had switched the books around and removed the evidence of self-seeking like awkward dinosaur bones from my act of homage.

* * *

I can take it then, can I, that nobody wants to hear any more about Book Fairs as of this present moment in time? That overbooked, booked out, or even double-booked is how we are all feeling? That if anyone did not attend even one of the up-to-six-simultaneous-count-them fairs which graced the Hotel Titanic, the Hotel Borgia, the Bloomsbury Grand Hotel Vanessa Bell, the Hotel Audemer of Venice ("Guests are requested to put out the light and then put out the light"), it was not for want of lacking the desire to, and they don't want to hear about the treats they have missed, the treasures cornucopiously displayed by five hundred, lord bless and preserve us! half-a-thousand dealers and almost as many customers, more, with parents and children and spouses and dog-handlers, than the population of Alderney or Niue or Grand Cayman, clustered and conglomerated and foregathered. You do not wish to know that the American trade turned up after all, that all those people who had been planning to blow their wad on a Webster manuscript thought better of it and spread the dough around to good effect, how X had the effrontery to ask £Y for *A brief treatise of Z* and W had the effrontery to pay it; how, on the other hand, M found the second recorded copy of N (albeit without the imprimatur leaf) on the stand of O who sold it to P, believing it to be the reprint by Q, how a good time was had by all and total sales at Park Lane alone amounted to a staggering £1.2 million,

only a whisker less (how sleek I could grow on such a whisker) than the £1.3 million paid in the latest auction-room dynastic shoot-out for four admittedly quite handsome leaves . . . You don't? Good.

* * *

Besides there are, suddenly, quite enough people writing about the book trade, with the indescribable Driffeld now a flourishing fortnightly devoted to rubbing the just and unjust impartially, a little like *Private Eye* without *Private Eye*'s delicacy and social responsibility, and a newcomer, *Slightly Soiled* (oh, anyone can do titles, titles are easy) which amounts to me-and-a-few-of-me-mates-have-got-together-to-denounce-eliquishness.

* * *

Who is or were the Agenda Club and in what cavern are they sleeping while we need them? I have here an Edwardian tractate, too posh to be a pamphlet in its square-cut small-octavo red cloth, with the figure of a gilt crusader among some *fin-de-siècle* foliage, which shows the simple and patriotic way out of our troubles. There's no discernible author: on the title-page it is called *An Open Letter to English Gentlemen*, followed by a truncated quotation about dear souls and happy breeds, another knightly device with the motto *Agenda* and the imprint. The British Library lists it (as cataloguing exercises go this one rates *V Diff* or even *Severe*: crumbling rock and no secure foothold) not under OPEN or LETTER or GENTLEMEN or even ENGLAND, but under LONDON III (MISCELLANEOUS INSTITUTIONS). Neither the BL nor the usual sources penetrate the anonymity, nor the mock-humble pseudonym ("Pars Minima" on page 35, though he was most certainly a he)

Sales of books and manuscripts

H. R. Woudhuysen

Sotheby's two-part sale on July 15 and 29 is noteworthy more for the types of material it contains than for large numbers of individually important lots. There are a few exceptions to this, including the first three volumes of David Roberts's *The Holy Land*, 1842-9, with 120 hand-coloured lithographs estimated at £20,000-£25,000, and six pamphlets relating to Admiral Coddington's part in the Battle of Navarino, bound together by his third son Captain H. J. Coddington in a slightly damaged volume and inscribed: "This book was thus wounded by a shot in the after cabin of H.M.S. *Talbot* at the Bombardment of Acre, 3rd November 1840" (estimate £350-£450). For the rest, the sale begins with Andrew Robinson's collection of books on aeronautics, most of which are concerned with ballooning. The largest lot in this part of the sale is William Appleby's *Encyclopaedia of the World's Aircraft and Astronautics*, begun in 1910, a vast assembly of press cuttings relating to flight contained in "235 boxes, 85 spring-back albums and 3 bundles", with a twenty-four-drawer card-index (estimate £1,500-£2,000). Elsewhere there are small collections of books about sport, cookery and books in Hungarian and some attractive maps of America and Australia.

A few items in Sotheby's last two-part sale of May 27 and June 10 (see *TLS*, May 23) did particularly well, although some of the more unusual items failed to sell or only reached their lower estimates (the early typeset draft of A. A. Milne's *When We Were Very Young* and the finely bound set of books which had won the Duff Cooper Memorial Prize were both withdrawn). The unpublished receipt signed by Newton as Master of the Mint made £2,800 against a pre-sale estimate of £1,000-£1,200. Ruskin's annotated copy of Kinglake's *Eothen*, 1846, fetched £420 to Jarrold's (estimate £150-£200) and a first edition of *A Shropshire Lad* went for £350 to Wise, significantly improving on its estimate of £200-£300. Estimated at £40,000-£60,000, a manuscript

of Edward Lear's *Book of Nonsense*, with sixteen limericks not included in any of the collections produced during Lear's lifetime, fetched £130,000 to Dalton in Sotheby's sale of illustrated, private press and children's books on June 19 and 20. Dalton bought heavily in the sale and came away with Arthur Gaskin's illustrations to the Kelmscott editions of *The Well at the World's End* for £7,500 and *The Shepherds' Calendar* for £8,500 (estimate £3,000-£4,000), as well as Beatrix Potter's five preparatory drawings for "The Owl and the Pussy Cat" for £8,500 (estimate £2,000-£2,500), and a Charles Ricketts drawing of a naked woman and a gowned figure, used in the Vale Press edition of Milton's *Early Poems*, 1896, which went for £11,500 (estimate £4,000-£6,000).

Sir John Tenniel's pencil and watercolour drawing of Alice, kneeling in the hall, with the white rabbit scurrying away went for just below its top estimate to Grainger for £34,000. Schiller bought three attractive Beatrix Potter lots, paying £8,000 for the finest of them, a pencil drawing of "two mice seated at table, an elegantly dressed companion entering the room to join them", which had been expected to fetch at most £1,500. Earlier in the sale a copy of Blake's *Illustrations of the Book of Job*, 1825, with twenty-one plates in proof impressions on India paper was bought for £8,800 by Hirschel and Adler (estimate £3,500-£5,000). The Eric Gill and David Jones material did reasonably well, but there was a great deal of it and some of the lots failed to find buyers.

Bloomsbury Book Auctions' sale on June 20, containing the "Webster" manuscript which failed to sell, had some more successful lots, although the better Stendhal items, the Ernst Bloch letters and the Hindemith score, failed to attract purchasers. The large collection of Dickens' first editions, including two autograph letters, was bought by Ballantyne for £15,000 (estimate £12,000-£16,000). In 1891 Pickering and Chatto paid just under £300 for the same collection. A first edition, second issue, of the *Lyric Ballads* made £1,100 to Sanders against a higher pre-sale estimate of £400 and a mid-fifteenth century manuscript of part of the Bible attracted some interest, fetch-

ing £2,100 to D. A. Smith (estimate £500-£700). Quaritch paid good prices for two late seventeenth-century books at the start of the sale: £350 for J. Partridge's *Mikropographicon or an Astrological Vade Mecum*, 1692, and £750 for Josiah Child's, *A New Discourse of Trade*, 1693, which had been estimated at £50-£75 and £100-£150 respectively.

Sotheby's western manuscripts and miniatures sale on June 24 (see *TLS*, June 20) was outstandingly successful: the 146 lots almost all sold and realized about two-and-a-half million pounds. The two best lots, the four illustrated leaves of the life of Thomas à Becket, and the early fifteenth-century Parisian Book of Hours by the Boucicaut Master, fetched staggering prices of £1,250,000 and £520,000; they were bought by Maggs reportedly for John Paul Getty, Jr., and by Kraus for the Getty Museum in California. Other lots did well, if not quite so astonishingly. Two late thirteenth-century leaves from Regensburg with initials containing the Crucifixion and the Resurrection were bought by Breslauer for £20,000 (estimate £4,000-£6,000). The Bibliothèque Municipale de Rennes paid £5,500 for the miniature of the Nativity, which completed its copy of the Book of Hours of Françoise de Dinan. The Yorkshire Calendar of the early fifteenth century went to Kraus for £14,000, far above its higher estimate of £3,000, and the following lot, an illuminated manuscript of the Wycliffite Gospels, went to a private buyer for £35,000 considerably above its estimate of £15,000-£25,000. Axel Bender paid £4,000 for a copy of the Statutes produced in London c1460-80: the Register of Writs from the same period fetched £5,000 (Maggs) and Kraus paid £6,500 for Henry VII's copy of the Statutes of the Order of the Golden Fleece. The dark horse of the sale, the Yonan codex, a Syriac manuscript, which has been claimed to be the oldest extant text of the New Testament, and once "travelled in a bus known as 'The Spirit of Galilee'" with "Christendom's most Precious Document" written in gold on the side, was remarkably successful, fetching £30,000. Against a pre-sale estimate of £12,000-£18,000, none of these prices includes the buyer's premium.

Letters

'The Minister and the Massacres'

Sir, — Nikolai Tolstoy's blustering and intemperate response (*Letters*, June 27) to my criticism of his book provides a fair taste of its contents but hardly makes its allegations any more plausible.

His reference to the Germans as the "Slovenes' formidable protectors" does not appear to be restricted to one group of Slovenes only. On the contrary, it comes in a chapter entitled "Flight of a Nation", in which the end of the war and the withdrawal of the Germans is described as meaning that "a whole nation found itself threatened with extinction".

The important role of the Cossacks in anti-Partisan warfare in Russia is attested, among others by Hans Werner Neulen in *An-Deutschers Seite* — a book to which Tolstoy contributed a foreword! Their role in the suppression of the Warsaw Uprising is mentioned by the (pro-Cossack) writer Josef Mackiewicz (*Tragedie an der Draut*).

The only hint of criticism of what Tolstoy chooses to call the Cossacks' "redoubtable" reputation in Croatia is the comment, buried in a long quotation by von Bosse, that "external discipline was somewhat below German standards". German sources are less one-sided. Glaise-Horstenaus refers to the Cossacks' "taste for alcohol, pillage and rape and their contempt for every life except their own". The diaries of Graf zu Eltz (*Mit den Kosaken*) provide graphic details of their depredations and also demolish Tolstoy's suggestion that these arose from religious or political sympathy with the Serbs.

To call Tolstoy's view eccentric seems to me, if anything, rather kind. I did not argue that the hand-over of non-Soviet citizens was ever officially contemplated or approved but merely that no instructions to screen the Cossacks individually had yet been produced. The instruction FX 79904 cited by Tolstoy is not such an order.

Tolstoy's treatment of Scott's account of Keightley's reaction to the surrender of part of the 15th Cossack Cavalry Corps on May 12 provides a nice cameo of his technique. In his letter he omits the first part of Keightley's reported comment that "by our agreement with the Russians, the Cossacks should have been handed over to them". He then cites the second part of Keightley's reported comment and claims that this "is correctly quoted from my book". Turning to his book we find that neither part is quoted! Instead, the following "paraphrase" is given. Keightley "expressed some displeasure, explaining that *strictly speaking* the Cossacks should have surrendered to the Soviets . . . Keightley told Scott of the *implications* of the Yalta Agreement, but nevertheless ordered him to escort the Cossacks behind British lines" (p 57, my italics). It is hardly surprising that Keightley did not want to reverse the surrender once started or see fighting break out between the Cossacks and the Bulgarian troops. But this does not justify Tolstoy's far-reaching claim to have "clearly" shown that Keightley then "felt himself in honour bound to treat his prisoners according to the terms of the Geneva Convention" — if this is taken as excluding their hand-over to the Red Army.

I did not seek to demonstrate Macmillan's "naivety" or his ignorance of the distinction between Soviet and non-Soviet citizens but merely to make the point that "previous Foreign Office instructions on the implementation of the Yalta Agreement" had not *explicitly* excluded the (Soviet) émigrés among the Cossacks. The documents cited by Tolstoy — with a characteristic sleight of hand making a ruling of February 19, 1945, appear as a response to a telegram of July 27, 1944 — do not contravert this.

I do not seek to "deflect the responsibility for the massacre from Macmillan to the British Army". It is clear that both played a part in the hand-overs — though responsibility for the massacres themselves clearly lies on the Yugoslav side. Whether the picture of the British military is "appalling" is a matter of opinion. But as far as the crucial issue of the non-Soviet Cossacks is concerned one point is worth stressing: Though many of the 'soldiers' in-

involved objected to the hand-overs — in some cases almost to the point of mutiny — their objections were not primarily legal. They objected either to the prospect of handing over any of the Cossacks — whether Soviet or not — or to the hand-over of women and children or to the use of deception and force. It is significant that the inclusion of the German officers in the hand-overs — surely the most blatant "overfulfilment" of Yalta — did not give rise to any specific protest and was referred to quite openly in written directives.

I am happy to be able to inform Tolstoy that I do not regard eyewitness accounts as "of little or no value to the academic historian" — although I do plead guilty to treating them with more caution than he does. I have spoken to a number of eyewitnesses, including Brigadier Tryon-Wilson, claimed by Tolstoy as his chief witness. He considered my version of events "very fair" and strongly disagreed with Tolstoy's accusations against Macmillan.

I fail to find Lord Stockton's response to Ludovic Kennedy's questions about the details of a brief meeting forty years in the past as damning as Tolstoy apparently does. Incidentally it is (yet again) disingenuous of him to suggest that the term "verbal directive" was used in the interview.

The fact that the White Russian "Rogozhin Corps" was not handed over, in spite of being referred to on May 13, merely underlines how cursory the discussions were. When the actual planning for the hand-overs began, the Corps could be excluded collectively, as being almost entirely composed of non-Soviet nationals. It is not an "ingenious" explanation. The breakdown of "Russians" made by 5th Corps includes as its two main categories "Cossacks" and (about 4,500) "White Russians".

Even on Tolstoy's conspiracy theory I cannot see what sinister reason Macmillan could have had for *deliberately* concealing a decision about the Cossacks in general, which would have been fully in line with British policy. As for the anti-Tito Yugoslavs, Macmillan did not recommend their hand-over in the course of his visit to Klagenfurt, and London was already informed about their presence in Carinthia.

I do not argue that Keightley "went out of his way to obstruct and evade" Alexander's orders to evacuate the Cossacks to Shaf in the north (on May 17). Before he received them 5th Corps had asked the Red Army to accept the Cossacks (in a meeting ignored by Tolstoy). The co-ordination with Shaf, far from allowing their evacuation "overnight" as Tolstoy suggests, was not complete by May 21 when the Red Army responded that they would indeed be prepared to take over the Cossacks *en masse*. Fifth Corps then sought and gained approval for the change of plan. Their motive was not "exclusively" an administrative or logistical one — it was also, as I argued, prompted by the desire to "keep on good terms with the local Soviet commander" or, in the words of a telegram of May 22, to "honour our verbal agreement with Soviet forces". Mussor's reference to an "operation of war" was clearly aimed at overcoming the distaste for the operation felt by many of his men. It is hardly convincing evidence that it "put British soldiers' lives seriously at risk".

I leave it to your readers to judge whether my accusations are "wild", my review "*ad hominem*" or Tolstoy's book worth reading. Tolstoy's closing resort to scurrilous innuendo provides a more damning comment on his arguments than anything I could have written. It is true that I strongly criticized his earlier work at a London University seminar last October.

ROBERT KNIGHT.
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Sir, — Nikolai Tolstoy (*Letters*, June 27) seems to invest an undue and unexpected faith in the authoritative nature of the pronouncements of Ljubljana's *Delo* in his effort to suggest that Robert Knight may have political motives for disliking *The Minister and the Massacres* (June 13).

I have not seen the number of *Delo* quoted by Count Tolstoy, but I did attend the colloquium of which he is so censorious — along with six other representatives of the British National Committee for the History of the Second

World War (a subcommittee of the British Academy). I also presented a paper on the day in question (December 10, 1985) and have the conference programme before me now.

Both *Delo* and Tolstoy misrepresent the contents of that half-day session. Of the four papers read and discussed, not one "was devoted exclusively to the question of the Yugoslav evacuation into Austria" (Tolstoy's description of the whole session). In fact, only Robert Knight's contribution, a reworked version of the seminar paper he delivered in Tolstoy's presence at the School in October, was concerned to any large extent with the flight of Yugoslavs into Austria in May 1945. The others — by Dr Fikreta Jelić-Butić of Zagreb (on the end of the Independent State of Croatia), by Dr Branko Latas of Belgrade (on the defeat and annihilation of the Četniks) and by myself (on British perceptions of anti-communist insurgency) — ranged far and wide, even if they did all relate to "counter-revolutionary quelling formations" in the final days of the war. *Delo*'s characterization of the session was, therefore, slightly more accurate than that of Count Tolstoy. *Delo*, however, could not have made the mistake of locating in Ljubljana a colloquium that took place in Brdo pri Kranju.

Guilt by association, whether with "communists" or "fascists", may be an appropriate means of scoring debating points, but Count Tolstoy's inability to get his facts right seems more relevant to the questions at issue.

M. C. WHEELER.
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'The New Jerusalem Bible'

Sir, — The production of *The New Jerusalem Bible* (reviewed May 23) has been a formidable task for a relatively small team of people, and I hesitate to question the value of what they have done. Nevertheless, it is far from clear to me that the translation is an improvement on the original *Jerusalem Bible* of 1966.

Some of the changes no doubt are the result of greater faithfulness to the text, and one cannot quarrel with these. Many, however, are mere matters of taste. The result is that the necessary changes are obscured: instead, general doubt is thrown on the competence and feeling for style of the original translation.

The stylistic changes are, however, not consistently carried through. One glaring example is that the entirely correct and idiomatic form of command, "You must (not) do so-and-so", is altered to the less happy "You will (not) do so-and-so" in Exodus and Leviticus but not in Deuteronomy.

Again, the new version has paid less attention to the needs of reading aloud. In Romans 9:20 *JB* reads "But what right have you, a human being, to cross-examine God?" *NJB*'s rendering will cause much more trouble at the lectern: "But you — who do you think you, a human being, are, to answer back to God?"

The policy of pursuing greater literalness in translation means that the Hebrew word translated "Behold" in the Authorized Version is nearly always rendered "Look!", whereas the original *JB* translators had realized that it was often better left untranslated. It is not clear why greater literalness should mean a return to obsolete words, such as "rebuke" for "remonstrate" in Matthew 16:22, "glory" for "approval" in John 5:41 and 44, and "Parade" for "Advocate" in John 14-16 (admittedly this term is explained in a note, but notes are not read out in church).

Divine speech in *NJB* sometimes descends to the ludicrous. In Genesis 6:3 God sounds like a petulant headmaster ("My spirit cannot be indefinitely responsible for human beings") and in Genesis 18:15 like a pantomime dame ("Sarah said, 'I did not laugh' . . . But he replied, 'Oh yes, you did'").

The original *Jerusalem Bible* was chosen as the preferred version for a number of the lessons in the Church of England's *Alternative Service Book*. A comparison of these passages in the old version and the new shows that *JB* was selected precisely for those elements of acceptable paraphrase which have been ironed out in the new version. One of the lessons for

Epiphany 3 is Philippians 4:10-20. It is a difficult passage to translate. Perhaps "no other church helped me with gifts of money" is not the only possible translation in verse 15, but the new "no church other than yourselves made common account with me in the matter of expenditure and receipts" merely translates the words and abdicates from the responsibility of conveying the meaning.

A fairly extensive sampling of the translation has convinced me that about one in ten of the changes made on stylistic grounds is an improvement. I hope the publishers will think hard before allowing *NJB* to replace *JB* in the more popular editions.

ROGER TOMES.
262 Withington Road, Manchester.

Charles Johnston

Sir, — Your reviewer's judicious conspectus, in his notice (July 4) of Vikram Seth's *The Golden Gate*, of recent English work using the Pushkin stanza may be extended a little into the future. Despite the suddenness of Sir Charles Johnston's death last April, he left behind in its final version a long poem in the form, *The Belgraveyard*, which, when it is published, will surely be seen to be his masterpiece.

ROY FULLER.
37 Langton Way, London SE3.

Tony Hancock

Sir, — I read with interest and concern Alan Coren's review (April 18) of the biography, *Hancock*, written by myself and David Nathan, and would like to correct some errors and misjudgments.

Very briefly, there was only one incident mentioned in the book when my nose was broken and at the same time my eardrum was pierced. This took place not as a form of wife-beating but because Tony's personality was changed when he was drinking heavily and he was angry that I was trying to prevent him from reaching for more.

I am sorry if Mr Coren thought my suicide attempts too numerous to count — in fact there were five, if you include the occasion when I could only find vegetable laxatives. Obviously I felt it to be partly my failure when Tony was unable to remain on the wagon.

However, the most important point of all is my sadness that Mr Coren has chosen to deprive himself of the great enjoyment to be shared with millions currently viewing and listening to the wondrous talent of Tony Hancock. Mr Coren should take note that often the man and the talent are divisible even though the genius matures as a result of the character of the man. If we judge both talent and people together we could deprive ourselves of much talent. One should judge them separately — you may choose not to like the man but you cannot deny his talent. Great artists are often very selfish egomaniacs who don't even enjoy their own selfishness but are driven and blinkered by their demanding and burning desires to refine and improve the God-given talents with which they were born.

I am sure that Mr Coren wrote his review with great compassion, and I might once have been gratified to have such a perceptive and discerning writer so concerned for my well-being. But it is eighteen years later and fortunately all we are left with are the reminders of Tony's talent on radio, records, television and video. I am perhaps more fortunate, as I have so many loving and happy memories to add to the others to which he refers.

FREDDIE ROSS HANCOCK.
40 Central Park South, New York, New York 10019.

Andrew Young

Sir, — Mr Woodward (*Letters*, July 4) is completely right, Mr Lindop was partly right, and I was almost wholly wrong. All I can do is to apologize to both those gentlemen, to you, Sir, for wasting your space, and to the beloved shade of Andrew Young.

RUPERT HART-DAVIS.
The Old Rectory, Marske-in-Swaledale, Richmond,
North Yorkshire.

COMMENTARY

The color rosy

James Campbell

The Color Purple
Various cinemas

A cruelly forced marriage, a tearful separation of sisters, a gothic case of unjust imprisonment, then a surprise inheritance and a tearful reunion. . . . What lifts Alice Walker's novel above the formulaic romances which in outline it resembles is the author's skilful construction of a naive idiom to express her heroine Celie's oppression and emotional capacity simultaneously, together with the deft use of a device involving an exchange of letters between the two sisters in which their divergent paths are traced - Celie skivvying on the farm as Mister's wife, and Nettie flourishing as a missionary in Africa.

Steven Spielberg, not noted for either his realistic or his subtle approach to the human drama (*Jaws*, *E.T.*, etc), obviously saw in *The Color Purple* a good story - that is, plenty of cruelty and tears, with the triumph of good (feminine bond) over evil (masculine bondage) in the end. Were it not necessary to lament the trivialization of a fine novel, and had the director been sensitive to the overuse of violins and rosy light filters, and curtailed the slapstick, then it might have been possible to recommend the film as "a good story" anyway. As it is, it is impossible to recommend it at all.

Of course, Walker's novel is no more dependent on the basic story for its effect than *Pride and Prejudice* is. The author's linguistic and plotting skills see to that, and also the way in which she has stitched in themes feminist and cultural, granting, for example, a central place to the role played by gospel, blues and jazz - "the sorrow songs", as James Baldwin has

termed them, echoing W. E. B. Du Bois - in the lives of black people. Spielberg pays lip service to these crucial elements of the book, only to invest them with the overall banality which charges everything he touches. There are no real characters in the film of *The Color Purple*, so one should not expect to find real emotions.

In the same stroke as it trivializes, the Hollywood camera prettifies all it sees: Celie, expected to clean up after Mister and his ungrateful children, the suffering recipient of all his lust and none of his love, still manages to wear a different, fetching frock every day and to slip into a silk nightgown at bedtime; the plantation house where the family lives is incongruously splendid; sunsets proliferate, especially at emotional moments; the music of Shug Avery, the jazz singer who begins as Mister's lover and ends as Celie's saviour, has been reduced to pop.

A further problem arises with the dialogue. A line like "She nst me bout the first one Whose it is? I say God's" reads well, written, as it is, as the expression of Celie's constrained experience, but sounds wooden when spoken - especially against a background of plantation splendour. Margaret Avery, who plays Shug, somehow wrests a performance of some dignity out of her plight (as does Whoopi Goldberg as Celie) but she has difficulty turning a line like "Us two married ladies now . . . What us got to eat?" into something worth listening to.

Hollywood is notorious for portraying black people either as servants (Mammy in *Gone with the Wind*) or as entertainers ("Play it again, Sam") or as people battling against the odds to gain acceptance into a white society which despises them (Sidney Poitier in *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*) or else for ignoring them altogether. In the case of *The Color Purple*, this would have been the best course.

The climate of war

Peter Kemp

ELIZABETH BOWEN
The Demon Lover
Granada

Elizabeth Bowen's "The Demon Lover" is a ghost story which scarcely seems to have sufficient body for substantial dramatization. Portraying a revenant's return to claim a woman to whom he was once engaged, it contains virtually no action and no dialogue at all apart from a few words remembered from a quarter of a century earlier. Derek Mahon's screenplay for Granada's film attempts to camouflage this by strenuous feats of grafting. To flesh things out, fragments cannibalized from other stories published in the same 1945 collection are raggedly fixed on to "The Demon Lover".

Elizabeth Bowen's Mrs Drover - a prosaic homebody - is seen alone during the one hour she spends gathering belongings in her deserted Kensington house, shuttered against the Blitz. The televised character has a far fuller day. Dropping in on a tipping neighbour, she steps out of "The Demon Lover" altogether and into an adjacent story, "In the Square". Dining out with unexpectedly smart friends - such as a drawing socialite played by Angela Thorne - she enters the chic ambience of another piece, "Careless Talk".

Not that there's anything careless about the talk in Derek Mahon's script - a contrived collage of lines snipped from Bowen's collection of stories and artificially distributed around the cast. The opening paragraph of "Mysterious Kôr", for instance, with its eerie evocation of wartime London in full moonlight, looking "like the moon's capital - shallow, cratered, extinct" - gets chopped up and processed into dialogue. Even the author's postscript to her anthology is pillaged. Her recollection that "in wartime many people had strange deep intense dreams" becomes a sudden outburst from a cocktail-swilling actress; "I'll tell you this - people have been having the strangest dreams". Her observation that, because of wartime deprivations, "Any little remaining choices and pleasures shot into new proportion and new value: people paid big money for little bunches of flowers" re-appears as someone's arbitrary-sounding declaration, "These days, people pay big money for little bunches of flowers". Underlining the self-consciousness of what is being done, it is archly remarked at one point, "I suppose that, even now, there's someone writing a book about the Blitz, trying to capture the atmosphere of London in the black-out."

Elizabeth Bowen, who was doing just that, described the stories in her anthology as "studies of climate, war-climate, and of the strange growths it raised". "The Demon Lover", though, also surveys phenomena that perennially haunted her imagination. Habitat, as usual, provides her favourite kind of fictional framework, as Mrs Drover wanders round the house - now like an empty shell - that has encased her married life. Bowen's fondness for inspecting what emerges when the facade of the normal breaks apart is on view too - not



A rare English delft figure of Apollo, c1679, part of the Rous Leuch collection of English pottery and porcelain, which was sold at Sotheby's on July 19 £59,400.

just in London's bomb-cracked buildings but the weird shattering of Mrs Drover's husband's habits. Relish for atmospheric effects is apparent in the thunderous sense of approaching storm the story brews: the "steamy" day, the "humid" light, the piling up of "ink-dark clouds".

By opening up the story and allowing the action to ramble all around London, Mahon's adaptation dissipates this oppressive power. As if to compensate, the production falls back on melodramatic means of signalling tension. As Mrs Drover tours her home, hisses and natters on the soundtrack suggest that she is making her way round a reptile house. Where the story's stolid matron, faced with an ominous letter, worriedly perches on an upright chair with its back against the wall, the film's protagonist frantically spreadeagles herself across the springs of a bedstead. Dorothy Tutin, generally bringing the right careworn countenance to the part - tries to give a performance of greater force. But Peter Hammond's clamorous direction is against her. Telephones jangle like alarm bells. Symbolism shrieks - especially in scenes showing a hen caught by a fox. Echoes from her past break in on Mrs Drover with deafening loudness.

One good idea struggles to emerge in the adaptation - the suggestion that the materializing, during the Second World War, of a supposedly defunct First World War soldier symbolizes the way the spirit of military aggression lurked underground during the 1920s and 1930s, waiting its day. But, bursting the story ruthlessly apart, this film of "The Demon Lover" leaves it almost as blitzed-looking, as the London in which it is set.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 286

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than August 1. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that, the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesses will also be taken into consideration. Entries, marked "Author, Author 286" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC4M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on August 8.

1 If it is wet a nineteenth-century Englishman is furnished with an organ which is called an umbrella and which seems designed for the purpose of protecting either his clothes or his lungs from the injurious effects of rain.

2 "Do you think it's going to rain?"
"T - spread a large umbrella over himself and his brother, and looked up into it. 'No, I don't think it is,' he said; 'at least - not under here.'"

3 The wind blew very Strong and Snow falling fast the time and the Wind almost directly in my face that it almost stopped my breath in reaching the funeral Service at the Grave, tho' I had an Umbrella held over my Head during the time.

Competition No 282
Winner: W. J. Nesbitt

Answers:
1 The sun is set; the swallows are asleep; The bats are flitting fast in the grey air; The slow soft toads out at damp corners creep; P. B. Shelley, "Evening: Ponte al Mare, Pisa."

2 The load beneath the harrow knows Exactly where each tooth-point goes. Rudyard Kipling, "Pagliacci."

3 But you may love a screaming owl And, if you can, the unwieldy load That crawls from his secure abode Within the mossy garden wall When evening dews begin to fall. Dorothy Wordsworth, "Loving and Little."

Imperial mélange

Mark Girouard

RAYMOND HEAD
The Indian Style
210pp. Allen and Unwin. £18.50.
004 720032 4

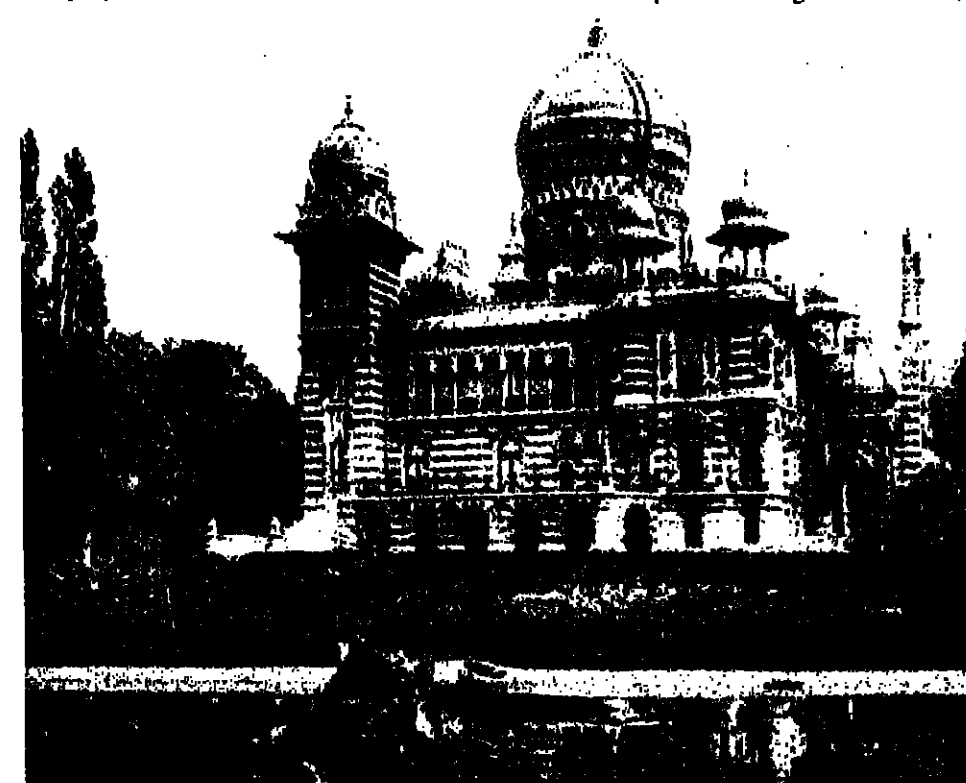
India, the English were always being told, was the brightest jewel in the English crown, but the possession of this subcontinent, with its wealth of glorious buildings produced by the Hindu, Islamic and other cultures, had a curiously limited influence on the architecture of the British Isles. The contrast with Rome, deeply imbued with the culture of the Greek world which it conquered, is a striking one. And yet there was some influence, leading to a number of buildings, a few of them remarkable and others at least entertaining or curious. England's uneasy but occasionally fruitful relationship with Indian architecture is the main theme of this interesting and enjoyable book, but the author widens his canvas to take in buildings or decoration in the Indian style elsewhere in the Western world.

The difference between the Roman Empire and Greece, and the British Empire and India, was that Rome was already heavily influenced by the culture of Greece before it conquered it, whereas England came to India ignorant of its cultures, and already committed to the classical and Mediterranean tradition. Even nabobs who went native in India conformed to the conventions and built Palladian mansions once they had made their pile and returned to the British Isles. Moreover, the more powerful the English grew in India, the stronger grew their inhibitions against employing the style of a conquered nation, which after the Mutiny was seen as a cruel and deceitful one as well. In the 1870s suggestions were made that the East India Company's Headquarters in London should be rebuilt in an Indian style, but they were turned down as "undignified"; and by the mid-nineteenth century Ruskin was dismissing Indian architecture as "monstrous".

This was the structure of disapproval or denigration through which any Indian style had to penetrate; and it is what came through the cracks that is interesting. The first breakthrough was in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when the dictatorship of

classicism had begun to crumble, architects could make serious experiments with other styles instead of using them as light relief, and in India a small but high-powered group began to record and study Indian buildings.

Most people who glance up from Cheapside to the front of the London Guildhall do not look at it carefully enough to realize that it was designed (by George Dance the younger in 1788) in an odd mixture of Gothic and Hindu. A few years later Dance's friend Samuel Pepys Cockerell designed Sezincote in Gloucestershire for his nabob brother Sir Charles as a highly successful amalgam of the Islamic, Hindu and classical styles, under a dome and behind a portal inspired by the Taj Mahal. This might have been expected to set a fashion, but it was built just at the time when the millionaire nabob was disappearing as a feature of English society, owing to the more rigid standards imposed on its employees by the East India Company.



The Chitenu Vaisler, Tourcoing, designed by Charles Dupire-Rozan, 1892, for Victor Vaisler, a soap tycoon; reproduced from the book reviewed here.

Religious and courtly

Simon Digby

STUART CARY WELCH
India: Art and culture 1300-1900
478pp. Deutsch. £50.
003 006114 8
SUSAN L. HUNTINGTON and JOHN C. HUNTINGTON
The Art of Ancient India
786pp. New York: Weatherhill. \$80.
03848 0183 3

The British conquerors, when they turned their attention to the subject, divided the history of India into three parts, the periods of Hindu, Muslim and British rule, roughly corresponding to ancient, medieval and modern. Today, disguised by euphemisms in the presentation of a non-communal Indian national heritage, the arts and artefacts of South Asia still fall with ease into this threefold classification, despite continuities which survived these catastrophic changes of rule. In the recent international exhibitions, in Britain in 1982, in America in 1985 and in France this year, cultural window-dressing cannot disguise the fact that the core of the major historical exhibitions must be either the ancient Indian religious sculptural tradition (Hindu, Buddhist and Jain, closely linked), or the luxurious court arts (principally book-paintings) of the Mughal emperors and other Indian princes of the period of the Muslim ascendancy. The New York Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition covered the latter field, and sought to surpass in a more adequate display-space the Victoria and Albert Museum's striking effort of 1982, *The Indian Heritage: Court life and arts under Mughal rule* (TLS, May 21, 1982). The catalogue of the Metropolitan exhibi-

tion, *India: Art and culture 1300-1900*, illustrates, mainly in colour, all the 296 entries, sometimes with several plates; it is a handsome souvenir reflecting the luxury of the age with which it is principally concerned. The first quarter of the book is only tenuously linked with this, being filled with two sections on "The Great Tradition", meaning the decaying "classical" tradition of non-Muslim religious art, and on "Tribe and Village". The exhibits in the latter section, a capricious choice, had little connection with the grand courtly art of the Mughals; indeed many of them would hardly have caused a stir in a routine sale at Christie's South Kensington rooms. The final section, on the British period, is also a token representation. The core of the exhibition is probably the most splendid display of Mughal paintings that has ever been mounted, particularly strong in the acutely observed genre-scenes of the mid-seventeenth century which are so richly represented in American collections. The paintings are accompanied by textiles and artefacts which, in spite of the stunning royal tent borrowed from Jodhpur, are not quite as interesting and varied as those that the Victoria and Albert was able to assemble in 1982. The exhibition struck a balance between the aesthetic and illustrative value of the exhibits. The catalogue seeks perhaps less successfully to present a panoramic vision of Mughal (and related Indo-Muslim and Rajput) art and culture through a carefully contrived sequence of catalogue entries. These entries, scanty in technical description, are commentaries and sometimes whole essays on topics that the exhibits bring to mind, written in the idiosyncratic style of the organizer of the exhibition, Stuart Cary Welch.

Welch often appears not so much a conventional art historian as a Great Mogul of a connoisseur in this field; his zest and expository

In spite of mid-nineteenth-century appreciation of Indian arts and crafts, pioneered in the South Kensington (later Victoria and Albert) Museum, of occasional buildings and interiors designed by resident Indians, and of Indian rooms installed at Osborne and Bagshot Park by Queen Victoria and her son, the Duke of Connaught, an Indian Revival never got seriously under way in Victorian England. In India itself, however, once the scars of the Mutiny began to heal, a group of English architects and engineers designed a series of extremely large government buildings or palaces for maharajas in what is now known as the Anglo-Indian style, a curious, sometimes wild and very occasionally wonderful mélange of Indian motifs and craftsmanship and Victorian composition. But it was not a style considered suitable for home markets. Baker and Lutyens (who despised it and indeed all Indian architecture) had to incorporate Indian elements into their public buildings in New Delhi,

but Baker's India Office building in the Aldwych in London got by with a few token Indian trimmings stuck on to its bland classical facade. A vast multi-domed Indian Museum was designed for a Thames-side site next to County Hall by R. F. Chisholm, one of the best of the Anglo-Indian architects, but never got beyond the drawing-board. On the other hand Raymond Head is, I think, the first person to have noticed that the curious little building next to the Albert Hall, now the Royal College of Organists, is a Victorian version of an Indian merchant's house, overlaid with Italian Renaissance ornament. The architect was Lt Henry Cole, of the Indian Royal Engineers, who happened to be the son of Sir Henry Cole, the dynamic founder of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Caspar Purdon Clarke, who became head of the Museum's Indian Department, admired the Anglo-Indian style, made something of a corner for himself in Indian pavilions for international exhibitions and was responsible for the vast and freezing Indian Hall erected by Lord Iveagh at Elveden in Suffolk in the 1890s. As a designer he was serious and scholarly, but lacked the slightest creative spark. It must be admitted that the Indian style worked best in the West when it was least serious. John Nash's outrageous but irresistible mixture of Indian and Chinese motifs in the Brighton Pavilion set a mood of fantasy which was resurrected in a number of late Victorian theatres and reached sublime heights of extravagant make-believe in American cinemas of the 1920s.

In fact, some of the best buildings described in *The Indian Style* were built out of the English orbit, in countries where architects could embark on Indian adventures free of the hang-ups which tended to inhibit their English contemporaries. In Hungary an Indian Revival, laced with Art Nouveau, was inspired by the belief that the Hungarians had racial origins in India. In America Tiffany and others used Indian models, and often Indian craftsmen, as a basis for sumptuous interiors for New York millionaires. In France a rich late-Victorian soap manufacturer built an enormous domed Indian chateau at Tourcoing which has to be seen to be believed - and alas, can only be seen in photographs, for like too many of the buildings skillfully disinterred by Head its fantasy has failed to weather the twentieth century.

Indian religious sculpture and temple architecture), notably those of Vincent Smith, Coomaraswamy, Rowland and Haerdt, retain much of their original value, but research, discoveries and publications of recent decades have filled large gaps and often provided a surer and more ample picture of the ramifications and relationships of this great and broad tradition. It is, for instance, only in recent decades that a whole school of fine early medieval bronze images and ivories from Kashmir and the North-West has been identified, or attention devoted to the Roman-influenced fifth-sixth-century sculpture from Samalaji and related sites in Gujarat. Susan L. Huntington, with formidable industry and the assistance of her husband, has provided a detailed general history which incorporates the fruits of recent research in every period and area "in the Indicsphere" down to the time of "influence by Islamic models" - around AD 1300 in Northern India but down to the eighteenth century in the South. The technical descriptions of sculpture and architecture (in contrast to the phrases quoted above) are generally clear and sensitive, as are the expositions of religious concepts and iconography. Some contentions of the authors are controversial (for example, their views on the early iconic representation of the Buddha), but they provide valuable summaries of the current state of knowledge. The small and rather grey plates are *aides-memoire* to illustrate the arguments of the text and are sufficiently numerous, though they often load one to search for a larger and clearer illustration of the same sculpture; and a small ground-plan is provided of every monument discussed. The system of cross-referencing the indices and the care taken with the layout make this volume easier to use than any similar work that I have handled.

Inquisitors versus handmaidens

Carol Rumens

SARAH DANIELS
Neptide
Cottesloe Theatre

Neptide, originally commissioned by the Liverpool Playhouse, won its author Sarah Daniels the George Devine Award in 1982, but has not been produced until now. Although not quite an apprenticeship piece in terms of Daniels's early-blossoming career (in 1981 she made her debut at the Theatre Upstairs with *Ripen our Darkness*, at the age of twenty-four) the play is rather a sprawl. It has some strong dramatic moments, its heart is obviously in the right place, but it is flawed, chiefly by the desire to tackle the central issue - the oppression of women in heterosexual, nuclear-family life - on several fronts at once. At the same time, the ammunition is a little rusty; *Neptide* is almost a period piece, time-locked, like so much feminist thought, in the insights and prejudices of the 1970s. Val's opening declaration from her hospital bed about the "powerful male doctor inquisitor" and the "subservient female handmaiden nurse" is an example, complete with illustrative cardboard nurse and doctor; it is rather like a poet writing "the grass is green, the sky is blue", and it prompts the same mental shut-down.

A uniformly strong cast and the swift pace of the production make up for a lot but cannot do much with the especially cumbersome early stretches. When, however, the play settles down to its main argument, a story of strong dramatic outline begins to emerge. Val's sister, Claire (played in primary colours by Jessica Turner), is a teacher in a girls' comprehensive school, involved at one time in a homosexual relationship and now fighting her ex-husband Lawrence (Michael Bray) for the custody of their seven-year-old daughter. She has not so far "come out" except to her immediate family, but is prompted to do so in the staff-room after the revelation of a lesbian affair between two of her pupils, is fiercely castigated by most of the other teachers, including the Thatcher-esque Head (a fine performance by Janet

Whiteside). It is a brave decision, given that it is likely to lead to her dismissal at a time when she can least afford any tarnishing of the image of "perfect" motherhood which British justice demands. Claire's predicament is real to us because we are shown (and it is pleasant to be shown and not told) that her relationship with her child, Poppy (delightfully played by Lucy Speed), is close and loving. Lawrence's petulant misery is evoked with similar conviction. Daniels builds up our sympathy with skill, but then slightly ducks the issue by failing to show us the process by which injustice is done to Claire. One can understand her reluctance to write even a one-scene courtroom drama, but a crusade against an unfair system needs to show us, if it is to transcend polemic, exactly how the unfairness works. All we see in fact is Lawrence's nasty lawyer advising him to "throw the book at" Claire, and that all these nasty males will succeed in depriving her of her daughter is very much a foregone conclusion.

The sub plot concerning Claire's unhappy heterosexual sister Val (Catherine Neilson) doesn't get the development it might have deserved, and as a balance to the clear-cut political absolutes of Claire's world, it remains lightweight. This is a pity because the character herself is quirkily original, despite her early speechifying, and the presentation of her husband Colin (Peter Attard) as a would-be sensitive soul makes the question of what is wrong with Val, family-life and modern motherhood all the more interesting. Joyce, the mother of Claire and Val, gets too big a share of the action, or at least of the dialogue. A stock character, filled in solidly and warmly by Mary Macleod, she pours out clichés and malapropisms like one possessed, though there are some redeeming moments: "Lawrence it's a fine to-do in this day and age when the ultimate in humiliation for a grown man like yourself is when your therapist yawns at you".

The text of Sarah Daniels's *Neptide* will be published by Methuen in their Theatre Scripts series on August 14 (48pp, 0 413 37800 3). Her play *Masterpiece* was published in 1984 (35pp, £1.95, 0 413 55470 8).

Strutting, leaping and opening the door

Robert G. O'Meally

COUNT BASIE: Good Morning Blues: The autobiogr. ph. of Count Basie, as told to Albert Murray 399pp. Heinemann. £14.95. 043404905 0

Good Morning Blues, Count Basie's autobiography, sends the reader back to the most authentic account of Basie's life, which of course is his music. There one finds that from 1936, when the first Decca 78s were cut, until his last recordings for Pablo, notwithstanding changing membership within his band, certain sounds stamped the music as no one's but Basie's: the tightly tuned rhythm section with the train-wheel chug-chug-chugging of Freddie Green's steady guitar; the sharply percussive brass section; the super-charged, singing reeds; the overall bluesy feeling, both on ballads and up-tempo stomps; and the perfectly timed exits and entrances by soloists, not the least notably by Basie himself, who could play stride or boogie-woogie, but who was best known for his understatedness: for his uncanny ability to make the sparest chord, or even a single note, swing.

Count Basie's music says much about its native land. In Basie's music one hears the timbre of the Negro American voice – talking on the horns, laughing, wailing, shouting, preaching, sweet-mouthing, telling tales. And though with Basie the blues is never far behind, his singers and hornmen also wail ballads. When Jimmy Rushing croons "These Foolish Things" in his high, edged tenor, or when Hershel Evans plays "Blue and Sentimental" (with Lester Young's yearning clarinet also taking breaks), it evokes Western dance-halls, a frontier on to open spaces and possibility. When the band plays the "One O'Clock Jump", this exhilarating Westernness sounds through; in fact the piece comes on like a national anthem. Basie's own story has overtones that are

archetypally American. A poor boy from the small town of Red Bank, New Jersey, the son of a gardener and a washerwoman, he dreamed of running away with the carnival. He would feed the animals or carry water, "anything just to be there where all of that fantasy stuff was happening". He also loved the cinema, not so much for the silent pictures themselves as for the live organ music which accompanied them. At school, Basie was only interested in performing in plays and concerts. There was a piano at home and he took lessons. Before long he was playing at the local cinema and at dances around town. He joined a vaudeville troupe and learnt to play as a showman, lifting his hands high, standing while he played, touching chords with his back to the piano; he learnt to ballyhoo, to accompany the show's barker as he called in the customers, and to comp, to play appropriately spare riffs while a juggler, dancer or stripper was on stage. These skills were eventually useful when he became a band leader. Particularly the comping: from his first band to his last, Basie readily yielded to other soloists and encouraged them with background punctuation; he could drive the whole ensemble with his glittering piano remarks. (It is interesting to note that as a youth Basie also

played the drums, and his bands always showed percussive force in both their rhythm and their horn sections.)

After reading *Good Morning Blues* one approaches Basie's music in a new way: one listens for his particular voicings, for his "opening the door" to his soloists, and the setting up of competitive exchanges between tenor saxophone players of contrasting sound. Hearing the band play "Moten Swing" or another one of its "heads" (compositions usually not written down but invented and developed in rehearsal), one recalls Basie's words about creating new music in the basement of the famous Woodside Hotel:

While somebody would be soloing in the reed section, the brasses would have something going in the background, and the reed section would have something going with that. . . . That's the way it went down. Those guys knew just where to come in and they came in. And the thing that was so fantastic about it was this: *Once those guys played something, they could play it exactly the same way the next night.* That's what really happened. Of course, I'm sitting there at the piano catching notes and all, and I knew just how I wanted to use the different things they used to come up with. So I'd say something like, "Okay, take that one a half tone down; go head down with it and then go for something." We'd do that, and

they would remember their notes, and a head down the heads that we made down there in that way were a lot better than things that were written

Tunes and arrangements which were written out benefited from much the same process. He and the other players would subtract, elaborate a theme, or change tempo or key until it was right – in his words, until it was "strutting" or "leaping". Basie is as understated an autobiographer as he is a pianist. This is not a gossipy book, is it a sob story. He wanted simply to tell good music, effortlessly swinging music, after a few bars, could be recognized as his own. He pursued his artistic goals against American commercialism, financial difficulties, and other pressures. This is the narrative, self-conscious, daring American musician who, in collaboration with such artists as Holiday, Hershel Evans, Lester Young, Buck Clayton, created some of America's authentic music. And Albert Murray served masterfully as Basie's "arranger" materials for this book. More than the usual case study that some reviewers in the United States have taken it to be, it is the most finished and evocative life history of an American musician ever written.

Juvenile passions

Arthur Jacobs

DAVID EDEN Gilbert and Sullivan: The creative conflict 224pp. Associated University Presses. £15.95. 0838632823

The sensational appearance of W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan on opposing sides in court in 1890 (when Gilbert sued Richard D'Oyly Carte in what became known as "the carpet quarrel") brought to the surface an inner tension. While Gilbert persisted in plots of almost mechanical contrivance, the composer sought representations of genuine emotion which his music could seize on. In his masterly dual biography of 1935, Hesketh Pearson established the differing personalities of the pair in terms of their professions – the domineering playwright and stage director contrasted with a composer known for his charm of manner and for his tendency to leave the creative task till the last possible moment. Pearson saw Gilbert as a gruff, grumpy Englishman with a hidden soft heart, "cantankerous in manner and generous in deed, [whose] sentimentality was screened with bluster".

David Eden takes a Freudian knife to cut more deeply. Re-examining Gilbert's expositions of torture and executions in word and drawing, and noting (as others have) his literary adoption of the nursery-nickname "Bab", he represents Gilbert as an "anal-sadistic", infantile personality, an impatient bully who "fled to the pre-genital stage of development". The analysis hardly convinces, especially when

simplified to an assertion in the last chapter that "the life instincts in Sullivan overcame the death instincts in Gilbert". Freud having declared that orderliness, parsimony and obstinacy will be shown in adult life by infants who refuse to move their bowels when placed on the pot, the author tells us that "we are entitled to surmise that Gilbert was, *par excellence*, one of those babies". Surmise indeed.

Yet the links established between Gilbert's life and his texts are often striking. Eden spotlights the soprano Euphrosyne Parepa, older than Gilbert but known to him since he was a baby, who gave him his first literary chance by asking him at the age of twenty-one to provide the translation of one of her songs. Was she, in fact, his juvenile passion? Was it her marriage to a military man that provoked "Haunted" (one of the most curious of Gilbert's *Bab Ballads*) in which a youth of seventeen confesses himself to have been in love with an older woman – but "an elderly colonel stole my queen. . . . If she wasn't the girl of a thousand girls, / She was one of forty-seven!"

A few months after Parepa was suddenly widowed at the age of twenty-nine, Gilbert published in *Pan* an amorous poem "To Euphrosyne, with my carte de visite". Only after Parepa got married again did Gilbert himself take a wife. Much later, in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, the anachronistic rank of colonel was reintroduced to identify the successful suitor who outwits the jester (Point/Gilbert) in marrying the singer (Elsie/Euphrosyne). Meanwhile, as if in disgust at his own former infatuation, Gilbert had pursued his notoriously cruel treatment of "elderly" females in love. Thus Gilbert's position in "the creative con-

flict" was determined by his own distant healthy, mature emotions. On the other composer's psychology is not so easily decipherable from his art. David Eden makes a little of Sullivan's devotion to his wife and his long sexual attachment to Frances Ronalds, a married woman older than himself. Less thorough attention is paid to Sullivan than to Gilbert. It is hard to pre-musicalian credited with an "unromantic activity of approach", yet "schooling his youth up in the romantic idea of egoism".

Eden deplores Sullivan's boyhood in the Chapel Royal ("He would have been better to enter a circus") because it "left him with the spiritual bankruptcy of Victorian Anglicanism". A truer judgment would be the church background gave the operetta's solidity of workmanship that helps them survive. Eden mistakenly infers a use of telephone in such entries as "Called: Cried Sullivan's diaries; this was simply Sullivan's habitual mode of recording that so-called on him".

That alleged pornographic creation, *Sod's Opera*, re-surfaces here. It is apparently identical with an obscene mock-pantomime *Harlequin Prince Cherrytop*, first printed privately in 1879. A later attribution to "G.A." is held to point to George Augustus Sala (since all the lyrics are evidently set to existing song-tunes) Sullivan is certainly implicated. David Eden thinks Gilbert may have been, but the possibility is not strengthened by statements like, "If he ever did write good to pornography he was probably a good hand at it".

Opera *Ring* conducted by Reginald Goodall. She now lives and works in Australia, where she has clearly found a measure of happiness that she never mustered in Britain.

Disappointingly, Hunter's book reveals absolutely nothing of her thoughts about the supremely challenging Wagner and Verdi roles in her repertoire, roles which she has sung with warmth of tone that Nilsson, for example, signally lacked. She is more concerned to wipe out both Turner and Goodall on the grounds of personal insult than to pay tribute to the way they schooled her throat into an instrument capable of interpretation and performance. It is a pity that someone who played a major part in an extraordinary operatic phenomenon – Goodall's Wagner cycle – could not record its history more objectively.

Where the book is more illuminating is in its charting of a career that has been incompetently directed by agents, managers and administrators. Rita Hunter needed advice, en-

couragement, patience; instead her talent was manhandled. The manner in which her period of success in America rapidly melted into a fiasco and left her virtually bankrupt, depressing evidence of the ruthlessly exploitative nature of the operatic business.

Nor does Miss Hunter spare one the details of her relentless bad health. I have never read a book in which anyone's appearance is so much time on, around, or thinking about as lavatory. Even when she goes to receive CBE at Buckingham Palace, the first Miss Hunter spots is "a large notice announcing 'Toilets'". Similarly tiresome (and not so familiar to anyone acquainted with the operatic memoirist) is the constant flow of predictions, strange coincidences, and visions from the dead which seem to assail her at every step.

A book like this needs considerably more editorial attention than Hamish Hamilton has seen fit to provide. The result is a narrow carry-on that does no honour to anybody.

Pathos and pathology

W. B. Carnochan

JAMES KING William Cowper: A biography 340pp. Duke University Press. \$35. 0822305135

At Valmy, on September 20, 1792, the French Revolutionary forces withstood the attack of Brunswick's Prussian army. Goethe was present and said: "From here and now there begins a new epoch in the history of the world." The day before, William Cowper had returned from his summer visit – altogether extraordinary for him – to William Hayley at Batham. For Cowper the visit had been a last effort to break out of the cycles of domesticity and depression that made up his life. The day that signified for Goethe a new beginning was for Cowper the beginning of the end.

Reading James King's biography, one forgets that there is a public world beyond the limits of Cowper's life, beyond Olney, Weston Underwood and Dunham. The story of this life is claustrophobia, a massive turning inward against the self. It is a world of endless detail, in which every step seems to embody private struggles against the inertia of depression. In such a setting, the biographer's habit of recording everything works here to the advantage rather than to the disadvantage of the biography. The most ordinary of daily matters are the backdrop to private terror.

Only as backdrop to a life like Cowper's could we care that his final journey to Norfolk

began at one in the afternoon; that there were two post-chaises each with three occupants (and who they were); that the travellers spent the night at the Cock Inn at Eaton, having arrived at five; that they spent the next night at Barton Mills; that the journey ended at six the next day at North Tuddenham where the travellers were met by Johnny Johnson's sister and by Margaret Perowne; that there was at North Tuddenham a church, a garden, a barn, a parsonage.

What is left out of my account is that as the travellers left Weston, Cowper "fully expected that 'the Tormentors would drag him out of [the carriage] at Olney, and tear him in pieces'". When they went through Olney, Johnny Johnson therefore drew the blind on Cowper's side of the coach, and all was well. In the sick-room, everything counts extra, the drawing of a blind, a stray breeze, a gesture, a glance. Cowper's life more than Pope's was a long disease, and King catches with sensitive dispassion the hypertrophied feelings of the sick-room.

He also manages to hint, compassionately, that sick-room dramas sometimes skirt the edges of bathos. Johnny Johnson, a clergyman and Cowper's second cousin, was a devoted friend in the poet's last years. He recorded the voices and dreams that tormented Cowper and, on one occasion, tried to intervene. Into a hole that had been cut for the purpose behind Cowper's bed, he inserted a tin tube and whispered into it these words in December, 1797: "Here's a happy New Year coming for Mr. Cowper, in this very house. – It will find you

contradictions of himself. . . . We witness also a darkening struggle between two authors as they live within their texts." The later writer has "appropriated" the model, so that these Horatian works "can never be the same again". Horace's self-portraiture, for example in *Satire II*, serves as a catalyst for Pope's own more intense self-scrutiny and self-debate; "it is all from Horace, and it is all different".

Summary and paraphrase belie the subtlety of Stack's account, which is the first to offer a genuinely parallel reading, and in effect to reinscribe the blank spaces on the opposite page where Pope carefully managed his typography of absence. Stack is fully alert to modern scholarship on Horace, and uses McGann, Fraenkel, Brink and Williams to define Pope's target more exactly. His sense of a self-dramatizing Roman poet does not fall into the older autobiographical heresies of Horace and Maecenas at the festive board that were ably opposed by Gordon Williams in his *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (1968). Indeed, the position Williams took is consonant with Stack's own: "But always humour is close at hand [in the *Epistles*]; always the tone is that of discussion, of playing with ideas, never of dictation or sermonizing." Stack is able to signalize Pope's striking departures without making Horace's verse seem merely provisional or, literally, pretextual.

Stack's most original stroke is to make heavy use of near-contemporary commentators, especially André Dacier's straightforward moral reading and the more subversive, politicized account of the Earl of Shaftesbury. Some of the more nakedly republican ideas expressed by Shaftesbury were not published until the twentieth century, and so could not be a source of influence (anxious or otherwise) for Pope. But Stack is arguing for a more dispersed kind of congruence, and he effectively uses both commentators as a control for the more complicated reactions which Pope sets in motion. Stack has produced a book with a clear and shapely organization, which is at its best on the major poetry. At its heart stands a long chapter on the letter to Augustus, perhaps the most richly elaborated exercise in this kind which Horace composed. The brisker sections, on a poem such as *Odes IV*, yield rather less by way of insight: here Steiner has outdone Stack in exposing to view the "collage" of past and present, created by Pope's wilful "substitution" for the original. But there is much to enjoy as well as to ponder in this careful, observant and sometimes eloquent book: Stack has written a *studied* work in the best sense.

busy with your *Ho-mer*. Here's a happy New Year coming for Mr. Cow-per." Cowper absorbed the message into his own delusional system. He heard the voice as saying that the time was come and thought that that meant the time of torments.

If King makes a misstep in portraying Cowper's pathology, it is in trying too hard to explain it. Cowper's mother died when he was six, he "clung relentlessly" to her, never completed "the rite of mourning", and "since he never fully detached himself from her, he spent his lifetime as the victim of melancholia". But King knows this is too simple, has in fact said just before that it is "perhaps" impossible to understand how the motherless boy became the outcast. Edward Gibbon lost his mother early. Swift was taken from his mother by a nurse. That they became who they were is also accountable, in some fashion, to these early experiences which, demonstrably, left marks. It could hardly be otherwise, and King is schooled in some of the psychological literature about loss. But the pathos of Cowper's life goes beyond the inevitabilities of loss.

The biography has a larger purpose than to perpetuate Cowper's image as the stricken deer, arrows of mental anguish infixed in his side. King's Cowper is possessed of "tremendous strengths", as indeed he must have been in order to write the poetry. At this point, however, King runs up against a self-imposed limitation; "I have avoided", he says, "writing criticism of Cowper's work in this book." In a sense, it is impossible to have done so and still to have talked about the poetry at all, but King resolutely steers away from close reading, nor does he try to cover anything like the whole of Cowper's poetic output. Much of that output was occasional and altogether resistant to coverage, yet readers may come away wishing they had been exposed to more of the poetry, and more intimately. In two revealing chapters about the little-known translation of

Homer, we learn everything about what went into it – Cowper's reservations about Pope's Homer, his subscribers, his problems with the publisher, and so on – but practically nothing about what came out; nothing, that is, of the poetry itself, except for a line or two in passing.

This steadfast avoidance of "criticism" also limits, or may seem to, the treatment of Cowper's last, most searing poem, "The Castaway". In it, King says, Cowper "directly evoked his anguished heart". But, says the critic in return, what does "directly" mean in a poem where craft is a match for anguish; in which elaborate interchanges of viewpoint mingle with acute self-consciousness? "No poet wept him", Cowper writes in the course of writing the drowned sailor's poetic epitaph. And like David Hume in his fragment of an autobiography, the poet at last speaks in the past tense, as though from beyond the grave: "we perish'd, each alone: / But I beneath a rougher sea, / And whelm'd in deeper gulphs than he." Like Hume's last words, this oblique appeal to the future asserts a version of survival beyond death, while it also asserts the living death that was Cowper's own pain.

Yet criticism of the analytical kind, which King meticulously avoids, risks impertinence in extreme cases like "The Castaway", even when the criticism happens to square with the poetic facts. E. M. Cioran once described modernity as unliking with the incurable: "Être moderne, c'est bricoler dans l'incurable." Obsessed with artifice at the cost of feeling, criticism in Cowper's case may look like tinkering with the utterly incurable. To be sure, poetic feelings are never naked, at least not when the poetry has a claim to our regard, but the naked feelings behind "The Castaway" are perhaps best honoured in a biography by analytical reticence. This biography, though less ingratiating than Charles Ryskamp's study of Cowper's early years, is full, diligent, authoritative, reticent, and moving.

A classic and the ancients

A. J. Smith

IAN DONALDSON (Editor) Ben Jonson 787pp. Oxford University Press. £17.50 (paperback, £7.95). 0192541781

Jonson studies have burgeoned, not to say mellowed, in the sixty-seven years since T. S. Eliot estimated in the *TLS* that Jonson's brutality and surface brilliance "ought to attract about three thousand people in London and elsewhere". Editions and performances mark the renaissance which university syllabuses have long prepared. The roughest of counts shows around a dozen editions of *Volpone* since the completion of the Oxford Jonson in 1952, at least six editions of *The Alchemist* and the poems (including Ian Donaldson's own excellent Oxford Standard Authors *Poems*), and a scatter of editions of other plays and masques. Memorable productions have been staged, not only at the national shrines but in the purlieus and provinces. Without question Jonson has become one of the more widely read and studied of our English authors.

In his review in 1919 Eliot countenanced no short way with Jonson. The indispensable prerequisite to understanding is intelligent saturation in Jonson's work as a whole; and he listed some half-dozen plays which a student must read before he will even find it "possible to arrive at a fair opinion of the poet and the dramatist". This new Oxford Authors edition allows room for two plays only, and those the most frequently edited, *Volpone* and *The Alchemist*. But it does give all of the English poems, the *Discoveries*, and the *Conversations with Drummond*. What distinguishes the collection is the quality of the editing. Students will find no more alert invocation of recent work on Jonson and the texts, or better-judged introduction and annotation of all the writings. The notes to the poems discreetly revise and improve upon the notes in Professor Donaldson's earlier Oxford edition. The new editions of *Discoveries* and *Conversations* are pure gain, not only saving us at long last the trek

through Herford and Simpson but showing those texts in the sharp light which has been thrown on them in recent decades. It is a pity that such helpful glossing of all the writings could not be more usefully disposed. Huddled together at the back of the volume the individual introductions and notes can scarcely offer the ready prompting students need with, say, the Blackfriars sitting which opens *The Alchemist*.

Donaldson's general introduction admirably rehearses the difficulties which Jonson's art must pose his modern readers, even when they cannot themselves track him very far in the snow of the ancients. How are we to take the poetry of a man whose personality is so powerfully present in his work yet eludes our zeal for the personal? Still more perplexing, what is left of the great poet-theorist when *Discoveries* discovers itself to be no original treatise but a cento of maxims from ancient and Renaissance commentators? Donaldson justly invokes the principle of imitation to resolve these puzzles. We must recognize that it is immaterial to the effect of Jonson's love poetry whether or not there was a Charis or Celis with whom the poet happened to be in love. Protestations of love offered poets from the troubadours to Donne a way of celebrating a beauty of body and mind which called for detachment as well as passion, and a public idiom. Indeed Jonson's understanding of imitation, as his practice shows it, is singular in its self-subordinating rigour. His concern is not so much to outgo as to make an author his own, and simply consummate the conceit in English. The difference is vital between a mode of imitation which looks back to a historical golden age – whether Augustan Rome or the Florentine *trecento* – and the assimilative art which grows from a conviction that in essence human circumstances do not change. If the like situations are always with us then we can do no better than to make exemplars of the classic formulations of them, as epitomes of permanent impulses which are not so much to be fossilized in rhetorics as continually re-imagined and re-accommodated. Jonson's scholarship is a living force. It follows his persuasion that the truth lies in particulars, and the particulars recur.

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Poet, futurian, holy fool

Peter France

VELIMIR KHELEBNIKOV
The King of Time: Poems, fictions, visions of the future
Translated by Paul Schmidt
Edited by Charlotte Douglas
255pp. Harvard University Press. £15.75.
0674 505158

Near the beginning of his pioneering study, *The Longer Poems of Velimir Khlebnikov*, Vladimir Markov quotes a rich selection of views of the poet, ranging from I. Aksyonov's "He was an idiot in the most ordinary sense of the word" to Roman Jakobson's "I have never ceased to consider him one of the greatest Russian poets and perhaps the most important modern poet in the world." Others see him as both madman and genius – and it is hard not to join their uninspiring company.

What is one to make of the man who proclaims: "I discovered the pure Laws of Time in 1920 in Baku, the land of fire, in a tall building that housed the naval dormitory where I was living with Dobrokovsky. The exact date was December 17th"; of the man who declared himself one of the Presidents of Planet Earth, and who maintained that "V in all languages means the turning of one point around another, either in a full circle or only a part of one, along an arc, up or down"? Madman or genius? And things are exacerbated by the legend which surrounds his life; here he figures as a holy and inspired fool, incapable of practical organization, wandering ceaselessly by train around revolutionary Russia, dragging with him a great pillowcase stuffed with mountains of notes, succumbing to typhus and malnutrition, and dying the tragically early and lonely death that almost seems obligatory for the Russian poet of legend. Small wonder that the blurb to this volume of translations announces that "general readers will be introduced to the legendary Khlebnikov, and cognoscenti will applaud the inventiveness of the rendering".

Khlebnikov's reputation has seen great ups and downs in the Soviet Union, but now his star seems to be rising, with a number of new editions, books and articles – even a pop record of his famous "Incantation by Laughter". In the West he remains little known except by the

"cognoscenti" – whatever Jakobson may have thought of him, he does not figure in our standard pantheon of twentieth-century Russian poets. Given his difficulty, this is understandable, but now the Khlebnikov Translation Project of the Dia Art Foundation is seeking to do something about the situation. The cognoscenti have been influential enough for the Foundation to commission a translation of the "complete works" – or so at least says the dust-jacket of this introductory selection.

It is a daunting prospect. It is not just that Khlebnikov can be a translator's torment, but also that the Russian editions of his works, based on his chaotic papers, are full of gaps and confusion. It will be a strange paradox, moreover, if Khlebnikov thus becomes more fully available in English than in Russian. One naturally applauds an ambitious undertaking of this kind, but not without wondering if it is really necessary or helpful to translate everything he wrote (what other prolific poet is ever accorded such an honour)? Meanwhile, however, this sample is full of good things.

Khlebnikov's visionary schemes of numbers, sounds and time will fascinate some readers. Who would not wish, if only in dreams, to acquire a mathematical mastery over the great



Vladimir Mayakovsky's drawing of Khlebnikov, 1916 (left), and (right) Khlebnikov's drawing of Vladimir Tatlin, c.1915; both are reproduced from the book reviewed here.

flux of events in time or an insight into the basic principles underlying the huge variety of languages built out of sound? Such ambitions go back to the universal language theorists of the eighteenth century, to Nostradamus, and beyond. In Khlebnikov they are given a special character by the utopian hopes of the revolutionary period, which also finds expression in visions of ideal cities, full of "swing-buildings", "tube-buildings", "goblet-buildings" and the like, all wired up for radio, the universal church of the future – a chilling prospect now. But none of this in itself would justify Khlebnikov's huge reputation. Nor indeed would his commanding position as a "futurian" – the neologism he invented to differentiate Russian futurism, with its strong Slavonic and primitivist elements, from Marinetti's modernism. All of this feeds Khlebnikov's poetry, but it is the poetry that matters; as the translator says in his introduction, "it is above all the extraordinary excellence of his poetry that justifies Khlebnikov and his endeavors".

He was surely one of the most remarkable practitioners in language who has ever written. He seems to inhabit the very heart of his language, exploring its roots, making it send up new and wonderful growths. This is much more



evident to Russians than to foreigners, of course – someone as alive to the Russian poetic word as Mandelstam could write: "Khlebnikov burrows in the word like a mole. . . . He dug passages through the earth a hundred years into the future." The foreigner who knows Russian can glimpse this and admire the marvels of Khlebnikov's language, though never with the inwardness of the native speaker. But what of those who approach him through translation? Can they come to see the importance and the beauty of his work? This is the challenge taken up by Paul Schmidt, the principal translator of the proposed complete works, and he rises to it nobly.

Unfortunately, perhaps, the bulk of the volume is made up of prose, including theory, drama and fiction; all of this is rendered effectively and imaginatively, with the right degree of freedom to make the texts work in English without losing touch with their often strange originals. Schmidt's approach to the poem is likewise free and it changes from poem to poem, since "no one rule seems suitable for such a vast and shifting terrain of language". In translating Khlebnikov's word coinings, he operates on English as his original does a Russian – and so comes up with a version of "Incantation by Laughter" that is far stranger and more suggestive than those usually offered: "Hlablil Uthlofan, lautlings!" In his experimental poems, which are the majority, he often captures the luminous power of the original, even if not the full appeal of the sound. And he can sustain this over many pages, which will be very necessary when he comes to translate Khlebnikov's large quasi-epic production.

In this volume we are given the extraordinary "supersaga" *Zangezi*, in which languages of birds and of gods, of prophets and of street banter, join with "beyoncent sound poetry (*zaum*) and large visions of historical change to produce a summa, a kind of crazier *Zaratustra*. That Schmidt can deal confidently with this bodes well for his larger enterprise. Even if one may argue about the need for a complete English translation, the looks set to be a fine achievement. It will be English poetry based on Khlebnikov rather than Khlebnikov himself, of course, since for all his universalist ambitions he remains locked into Russian. But perhaps it will give some readers courage to explore the great original

significant or not, tend to come out as equipollent. If the biographer had concentrated on some and skipped others a truer picture might have emerged. As it is, there are too many pululating proper names in the familiar Russian mode; there is too much bald information, genealogical and similar. The omission of precise reference notes is regrettable, for scholars as well as general readers are bound to consult so important a study.

Tsvetaeva's frenzied lesbian love affairs are documented with relish. She became famous for the violent "crushes" which she conceived for persons of both sexes. Some of these love-objects she had never met; some, indeed, were historical figures who had died before she was born. Endowing her lovers with imagined attributes, she would plummet into anguish when they failed to live up to her assumptions about them. In love she was, to put it mildly, apt to accentuate the cerebral. This was all well understood by her husband Sergey Efron, a White officer and later a Stalinist undercover agent. All of this – passion, jealousy, hatred, besottedness, despair – helped to inspire poetry that makes most other Russian verse seem flaccid by comparison.

In 1926 Tsvetaeva conspired with two other poets of stature comparable to her own – Pasternak and Rilke – to generate an intense, three-way, mutual "crush". Since Pasternak and Tsvetaeva both wrote fluent German, while Rilke was a devoted student of Russian, there was no linguistic obstacle to the flow of *Schwärmerel und umfließen* (its Russian near-equivalent) between poet and poet. Mostly the correspondence was in German (to and from Rilke). The material was published in German in 1983; *Letters Summer 1926* now offers it in English translation.

The letters are important as keys to the three poets' literary attitudes, and to the intention which lie behind some of the finest twentieth-century verse. As documents in their own right they can sometimes seem daunting; though self-indulgent, capricious. Battered by such quirky exuberance, even the most devoted reader may crave the occasional flat statement, touch of irony or soothing cliché. Most of this was not written for publication, of course, and it does prompt the reflection that all three poets wrote far more effectively when their poems were restrained by prosodic discipline.

Tsvetaeva emerges as the most tongue-in-cheek and self-parodying of the correspondents, with Pasternak as the one who seems to take himself the most seriously. Rilke is perhaps the most thought-provoking of the three. Though tutored and egged on by two such hyperbolic obfuscators, he tends to keep his head, being less infected by emotional incontinence *à la russe* than (say) his contemporary Middleton Murry.

The Russian Symbolist Theatre: An anthology of plays and critical texts, edited and translated by Michael Green, has recently been published (371pp. Ann Arbor: Ardis. \$37.50; paperback, \$13.95, 0 88233 797 1). Plays translated here for the first time are Fyodor Solov'ev's *The Triumph of Death*, Mikhail Kuzmin's *The Comedy of Alexis*, Man of God, Innokenty Annensky's *Thamyris Kitharodas* and *The Tragedy of Judas*, Prince of Icarion by Alexander Remizov; other writers whose work is presented include Valery Briusov, Aleksei Blok, Vacheslav Ivanov, Andrei Bely and Leonid Andreyev.

Contracts with the common world

Peter Brooks

CHRISTOPHER PRENDERGAST
The Order of Mimesis
288pp. Cambridge University Press. £27.50.
0 521 23789 0

A couple of decades after Erich Auerbach in *Mimesis* masterfully charted the history of the representation of reality in Western literature, the very idea of mimesis had become something of a shambles, one of those terms – along with "representation" itself – that new French critical thinking had consigned to the *annuaire* of old Sorbonne "humanist" delusions. The story is by now familiar. Structuralism and semiology, then post-structuralism and deconstruction, subjected the notion of representation to a critique derived essentially from Saussure's postulation of the arbitrariness, or immotivation, of the linguistic sign. Jacques Derrida followed out the implications of the fact that signs, by their very nature, name as absent that which they claim to make present. On the most literal level – reading the letter against the presumed "humanist" spirit of the literary text – the notion that language (aside from some limited instances of onomatopoeia) could imitate anything other than itself was shown to be an absurd proposition. Mimesis, for instance in the later work of Roland Barthes, came to be seen as a nauseating bourgeois convention, a *doxa*, another ex-

ample of a cultural invention masquerading as a fact of nature.

Christopher Prendergast – who wants to rehabilitate the notion of mimesis while giving its critics a full hearing – is able to show that most semiological and post-structuralist pronouncements on the question of representation repose on a rather naive understanding of the philosophical problem of reference, one that needs correction through study of late Wittgenstein and other philosophers in the analytic tradition (a project that is in fact under way in France at the present moment). Yet of course showing that Barthes *et al* displayed a cavalier attitude towards the philosophical analysis of reference may be somewhat beside the point. French criticism of the 1960s and 1970s underwent a creative renaissance on formalist premisses similar to Saussure's: the discovery of what could be done within a formally defined field once one had bracketed certain questions (such as reference, representation, the *vraisemblable*, the moral coordinates of literature, etc). This opened up possibilities of reading in new ways, with a new attention to a text's internal systems for producing meaning.

But the moment has clearly come for criticism to stage a "return of the referent", and a new scrutiny of the possibilities of mimesis, to which Prendergast's erudite and tightly argued book offers a welcome contribution. He has read widely and well in modern literary and philosophical theory, and he is very good at defining and stating in their essence the posi-

tions under debate. His own argument has real sinew and polemical verve, and the book is an extremely valuable one.

On his way to his proposals to retrieve mimesis for criticism, Prendergast offers readings of the problems of representation in four nineteenth-century novelists, Balzac, Stendhal, Nerval and Flaubert. These readings are all splendid, if also somewhat perverse in the context of his overall argument, since they tend to demonstrate the very impossibility of the mimetic premisses to which the novels in question appear to lay claim. In the case of Balzac, for instance, Prendergast tellingly shows how, notably in *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes*, the linguistic sign enters into an overheated economy of exchange, a circulatory system which produces bogus messages, secret codes, ideological flip-flops, forgeries: a process which undermines the narrator's ostensible claims to fix the meaning of signs and their referents, and to find a stable point from which to speak with "authority". Balzac's desperate attempt to map the essentially fluid, fugitive and metamorphic signals the onset of a crisis in representation that would only become more acute in the age of what we once thought of as the great realist tradition. Nerval's *Sylvie* provides a kind of allegory of the troubles of representation, a play of substitutions that can never lead back to the motivating point of origin it claims to need to recover. With Flaubert, the problem takes a new twist, into "stupidity", the mouthing of mimetic commonplaces in such a

way that one does not know, one cannot know, whether they are to be taken "straight" or ironically.

It is thus in full awareness of the problematic status of mimesis, and also the contradictions of the theoretical discourse about mimesis from Plato onwards, that Prendergast undertakes to rehabilitate the concept. His approach has the great merit of refusing the "common-sense" reaction that simply, in a gesture akin to Johnson's kicking the stone, removes the inverted commas from such terms as "reality" and "representation". Common sense is too often a cover for the unacknowledged ideological commonplace, a refusal to examine the grounding of one's discourse, which seeks to impose rather than argue its premisses. Prendergast's rehabilitative efforts proceed rather by way of the Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*, the notion of "language games" and the social uses to which they are tied, the "forms of life" which in practice set a limit to the play of signification. Following a suggestion of Moshe Ron, Prendergast argues that mimesis itself is a "form of language game, based on a set of agreements between a 'mimetic author' and a 'mimetic reader'". It then remains to show how the rules of this game "match" to "the meanings embedded in the norms of common use and understanding at work within a given form of life". When we speak of mimetic texts as referring to reality, we are essentially talking about "a matter of shared recognitions, or a matter of 'contract'".

A further specification of how mimesis works is provided by Paul Ricoeur's careful rethinking of the Aristotelian notion as a dynamic, creative act: mimesis as a branch of *poiesis*, a matter of what Ricoeur calls "configuration", which involves the interaction of literary representation with other modes of social practice. A distinct advantage of Ricoeur's approach is its refusal of the radical individualism and subjectivism of reading and interpretation that have characterized much "deconstructive" work: the products of mimetic configuration are "irreducibly social and collective in character. . . . Plot discloses a 'structure of care', and its teleology a 'narrative of pre-occupation', a caring about how we make sense of a common world through projections towards and retrospections from common 'ends'".

Prendergast is acutely aware that a line of contemporary French thought – notably in recent work by J.-F. Lyotard, and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari – sees such a search for commonality and consensus in mimetic orderings as repressive, a matter of "policing", the dictation by those who have power as to what gets represented, which stories get told. The aesthetics of mimesis implies a politics, which the deconstructive turn in criticism has exposed in a liberationist gesture. Yet to accept to play endlessly the deconstructive "turn" may be, Prendergast argues, to condemn ourselves to a solipsistic individualism. It is worth trying to rescue the "order" of mimesis because it provides shared forms for publicly engaging shared questions.

"speech communities" in their actual social circumstances and study the relations between one community and others in a "linguistics of contact".

Jakobson found only one true friend during the conference, in another Stanford professor, Paul Kiparsky, a tough-minded generative grammarian and psycholinguist. Kiparsky was not having it that Jakobson was wrong, because there is laboratory proof that the characteristic devices of literature – such as parallelism, which was Jakobson's favourite – conform to universal features of language, hence they are innate, ultimately physiological, and presumably inevitable.

Kiparsky fell foul at Glasgow of one of the most energetic and spectacular of all relativists, Stanley Fish, for long a professor of English but now a professor of law, and in irresistible forensic form. Fish had already delivered a dazzling, caustic, zapping (there is one school of hermeneuticists who believe that the original of Professor Fish is one Morris Zapp) paper on Freud, whom he exposed in his treatment of the poor Wolf-Man as a supreme but devious rhetorician, playing out a drama of mastery and not of cure. Fish's point – which we shall have to learn to refer to as "anti-foundationalism" – is that all discourse aims to persuade and is a move in a power-game, and that all interpretation of it is conducted by reference to an interpretive community. By which token, Kiparsky's rationalism is, if not subverted for good, then made relative.

The disagreement between Kiparsky and Fish sealed the discord between hard linguistics and the variously soft students of literature present at the colloquium, who might merely claim to be language-minded ("I'm no linguist, but . . .") was the modest disclaimer of David Lodge). Some on the literary side had a go, nevertheless, at seeing how the inviting space between library and laboratory might be usefully occupied: Jonathan Culler notably, speculating about a linguistics of writing which would codify literary practices or patternings not normally deemed worth codification; and John Hollander, more elaborately, who claimed, as Raymond Williams had seemed to before him, that linguistic theories might be derived from intelligent study of actual texts, especially, in Hollander's case, punning and tropeful works like *The Faerie Queene*.

Given Attidge's inaugural plea for a more socially minded poetics, it was odd that only one speaker had Bakhtin as a subject, since that remarkable Russian theorist of literature, and of the novel above all, called long ago for the study of literature to be sociolinguistic or anthropological, that we should see it as

linguistic but also as socially and historically rooted. David Lodge spoke to the title "After Bakhtin", which might have made it seem that Bakhtin had been and gone, without anyone much noticing him. But Lodge was most persuasive in his cause.

By the third and last day of the colloquium its title had been thoroughly deconstructed. This gave much appropriateness to the appearance then of Jacques Derrida, who answered questions about his work and its possible noxious effects benignly and wittily, in English. He said one quite startling thing, which was that he is no way *against* the "metaphysics of presence" even though he has spent twenty years or more dismantling it; that, on the contrary, he takes Presence to be wholly, even Absolutely good. He then identified a full Presence with death, hence the "necessity" he felt in himself always to show Presence to be divided, as a defence against this threatening Absolute. This seemed as much autobiographical as philosophical, and to indicate a mystical dimension to Derrida's long absorption in the play of Presence and Absence.

His brief exposition and justification of his ideas was in any case a reminder that colloquia like the one he was party to are all the truer and richer for being de-centred. "The Linguistics of Writing" brought out, at a refreshingly high intellectual level and most fruitfully, why Linguistics and Literature can never merge.

'With tact, scholarship and ingenuity, he makes us aware of what might have been and never was' – *Sunday Telegraph*

ROY STRONG

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Only a game

Paul Smith

ERIC MIDWINTER

Fair Game: Myth and reality in sport
173pp. Allen and Unwin. £12.95.
004 7961139

At moments, reading Eric Midwinter is like settling down to a quiet pint before the match only to find that, sidling up to the bar, is one of those staring-eyed, wild-haired, finger-jabbing, utterly self-convinced cranks, as intolerant of agreement as of dissent, from whose unstoppable flow of recondite knowledge and righteous indignation nothing but a plea of natural necessity will bring relief. *Fair Game: Myth and reality in sport* is a rant, but it is a reasoned and very well-informed one (it could almost serve as a short history of organized sport in the past century, which makes the absence of references a pity), and much of it carries conviction.

Midwinter is the prophet of the fundamental truth that we have spoiled our sport by taking it too seriously. He rejects nearly all the significances which have been read into it, denying that it successfully sublimates aggressive urges, that it trains character, that it inculcates "transferable skills", that its various manifestations can be endowed with an impressive historical

pedigree or with the aura of quasi-religious rites. Those are the myths: the reality for Midwinter is that modern organized sport is the product of Victorian town life, diffused all over the world by Western European cultural imperialism. The games available to occupy and sanitize the leisure of a young, expanding factory population were invented by middle and upper-class agency with the rules, regularity and bureaucracy appropriate to the industrial system which they served and to the centralized nation-state, for the assertion of whose prestige they became a major means - the "international" being "perhaps the most deadly step taken in heightening the myth of sport's solemnity and import". Professionalism and commercialization withdrew sport further and further from its proper realm of play, and television, seizing on sport's capacity to fill time cheaply and giving it "an artificial pre-eminence . . . which is out of proportion to its actual interest or popularity", has substituted armchair viewers for active participants (even if only as spectators) in a collective theatre, and left sport dependent on the programme planners and the commercial sponsors, and at the mercy of the Bothams and McEnroes who supply the necessary ration of incidents, interviews and off-stage malarky to keep the pot on the boil.

One does not have to accept every particular of this version. Midwinter's historical analysis

perhaps sees the formalization of Victorian sport too much as a matter of the imposition of middle-class conceptions on working-class pastimes, too little in terms of the nineteenth century's powerful impulse towards voluntary association and search for new focuses of group identity. It is not at all certain that he is right to dub "preposterous" the idea that games can influence the development of character, moral values and skills. His conventional assumption that football hooligans are Saturday-afternoon compensators for "sad and desolate weekdays" may be too glib: some of the most carefully orchestrated violence seems to come from men whose weekdays are not obviously more sad and desolate than his own, but whose notion of enjoyable recreation is dangerously different. However, the dissection of sport's ills is trenchantly done, with a wealth of supporting detail (generally accurate, despite "Toronto's McGill college"). As usual, the problem is to prescribe the remedies.

Midwinter turns out to be preaching salvation by snooker and redemption by fun run. On the one hand, professional sport must embrace wholeheartedly its function as a branch of the entertainment industry, with its performers giving the customers what they expect from actors or musicians, "public conduct of good order", as well as professional competence. On the other hand, sport for all "should be in praise of mediocrity, not of excellence".

aiming at the widest possible participation regardless of achievement. The second proposition seems to be enjoying some vogue. The first neglects the fact that professional sport has always been a branch of the entertainment industry. Spiers and Pond did not organize the first England cricket tour of Australia or H.A. Mears set up Chelsea Football Club purely for love of the game.

The snooker Midwinter makes so much of exhibiting the true lines of modern sport is less a prototype than one of the most sophisticated in a long line of products. It has little to do with the normal conception of sport as involving energetic physical activity: artificially created as a pastime, it has been artificially promoted as a money-spinning filler of programme space, perfectly adapted to the needs of color television. Green baize, however, is no substitute for greensward, and the snooker format is not going to help save the Football League's County Championship. When Midwinter's major league of eight clubs (keeping out of Europe except for exhibition matches) comes into being, football as a national game will be finished, because the symbiosis with urban identity which underpinned its brief ascendancy will finally be dead. Everton, Midwinter reminds us, originated in St Domingo's Vale New Connection Methodist Sunday School, and there it seems, in his vision, it must return.

It is with the functions of books that de Hamel is concerned, rather than with the appearance or historical development of their script and decoration. His emphasis is on the purposes of book making, and on the scribes, readers, ownership, uses and social context of medieval manuscripts, whether illuminated or not. A conventional chronological approach is ostensibly eschewed. Instead, a chapter each is devoted to some of the principal reasons for making books in the Middle Ages. De Hamel tackles these in terms of the ultimate customers or readers - missionaries, emperors, monks, students, aristocrats, "everybody", priests and collectors are considered. That this arrangement in fact provides a chronological progression from the seventh century to the fifteenth is at the expense of some, inevitable, distortion. Most of the categories the author supplies are relevant for every century of the period he discusses, but it is arguable that each category in its turn subsumes the most striking among the extant manuscripts from its period. The dangers inherent in the author's classification, fully acknowledged by him, are nevertheless offset by the interest and productiveness of this novel approach, and the degree to which it sharpens the reader's focus.

The coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England brought the books of the new faith with it. Too much is, perhaps, made of the Roman and Italian sources for new texts, at the expense of the crucial contribution from Frankish Gaul. The beautiful visions of the world of God created by the insular scribes and artists in the Books of Kells, Lindisfarne, Echternach and many others are surely to be understood as exuberant acclamations of faith in a new Church, rather than as the books actually transported to the mission field. It was copies of the writings of Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville and Bede, which are also described by de Hamel, that were necessary for the work of evangelization, together with more utilitarian copies of the gospel texts. Nevertheless de Hamel evokes the sheer impact as objects of beauty and value that the finest of the insular manuscripts, and the marvelous Gospel Books and Psalters owned by the Carolingian and Ottonian rulers of France and Germany in the ninth and tenth centuries, would have had. In a telling elaboration of the theories concerning the significance of gold in an early Germanic culture, de Hamel sees these books, many written in gold, not just as a symbolic imitation of the late Roman imperial books in gold on purple-dyed vellum, but as an expression of a barbarian ruler's glorying in gold and treasure. Emperors, he suggests, "probably built up libraries mainly because books were treasure and partly because they conferred a suitable image of culture". Concentration on the magnificent codices in the libraries of the Frankish rulers does, however, give the misleading impression that intellectual activity in the ninth century was entirely sub-

Books for devotion and devotion to books

Rosamond McKitterick

CHRISTOPHER DE HAMEL

A History of Illuminated Manuscripts
256pp. Oxford: Phaidon. £25.
07148 23619

Despite its bland title, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* by Christopher de Hamel is a splendid and refreshing departure from the run-of-the-mill popular books on pretty manuscripts which appear with such monotonous regularity. It is no mere history, but an original, lively and richly illustrated commentary on many aspects of book production in the centuries before the introduction of printing. The high quality of the 250 reproductions, in black-and-white and colour, does justice to the technical mastery and vibrant imaginations of the artists who produced the illuminations. But pictures are ancillary to the main themes. Notwithstanding the many acute observations accorded the decoration of the manuscripts he discusses, Dr de Hamel does not pretend to be an art historian. His vision is broader, and he brings to his subject the expert knowledge and zest which his work for his *Glossed Books of the Bible and the Origins of the Paris Booktrade* (reviewed in the TLS, August 16, 1985) and his past eleven years as head of the Western Manuscripts department at Sotheby's have given him.

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ordinate to this artistic effusion of magnificence. The bulk of the extant Carolingian manuscripts, on the contrary, are a witness to the zeal with which the Franks embraced Christian culture and the late Roman heritage, and their multifarious intellectual activity.

It is only in the sections on the book production of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that de Hamel discusses the intellectual endeavour of monks and students. There are fascinating descriptions of the way in which the great monastic libraries, especially in England, were stocked, and it is in the chapter "Books for monks" that a clear and detailed analysis of the process of book production in the Middle Ages is provided, together with some very suggestive comments on methods of decoration. There is, for example, the evidence of the directions to the artist in the initials of the twelfth-century Glosed Epistles of St Paul (Bodleian Library, Auct D113), where a French-speaking artist who designed the initial on f1r has noted the colours for a second painter to supply subsequently. The dramatic account, in the chapter "Books for students", of the professional book business in thirteenth-century Paris, the growth of the book trade and the intimate interdependence of intellectual developments, publishing and commercial book selling and copying, is possibly the best in the volume. The growth of secular tastes and production of copies of romances and epic poems, with their enchanting illustrations, is equally sensitively handled - though terming them "books for aristocrats" is very loose: they could as well have been discussed together with the lucid exposition of Books of Hours, the archetypal illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages, as books for "everybody". It is for the Books of Hours that de Hamel most obviously deploys the expertise gained from his position at Sotheby's. These are the commonest books surviving from the Middle Ages, and were in their time the most likely for any well-to-do medieval family to have purchased. They were emphatically not just mere objects of value, or even holy relics, but an expression of devotion and evidence of lay piety. De Hamel is right to stress that the cultural impact of these modest illuminated prayerbooks was far wider and deeper than the rarer and more spectacular literary texts, with which scholars more usually concern themselves. Social historians, particularly those studying popular religion, would be well advised to explore the distribution, production and ownership of Books of Hours, and de Hamel has provided useful hints of the necessary preparations for

such an enterprise. He also makes many interesting comments on the pictures in these books, such as, to cite only one example, the discovery of the quotation, by the "Bedford master miniaturist" in a number of his Books of Hours, of the background landscape from Van Eyck's portrait of Nicolas Rolin kneeling before the Virgin and Child.

The theme of private devotion and prayer texts is expanded in the chapter "Books for priests", which has as its main subject the vast corpus of liturgical manuscripts from the late Middle Ages. Again, with characteristic lightness of touch, the complexities of the structure of liturgical books, the Missal, Breviary, Antiphoner and Gradual, are clarified. The final section of this chapter describes the return to fashion of the great lectern Bibles, many of them very grand manuscripts indeed. Some understanding of the importance of these books, within the Church and society of fifteenth-century Europe, is given by the observation that Gutenberg's first major project after he had set up his printing press in Mainz was a Latin lectern Bible. The printers, in other words, exploited the existing market for books.

It is fitting that the last chapter in de Hamel's survey is a triumphant demonstration of the coincidence of taste, scholarship, invention, enthusiasm, wealth and market forces in the gathering of libraries by the humanists and their patrons in the Renaissance. Quite apart from sketches of the enterprising Vespasiano di Bisticci and the collector William Gray, sometime Chancellor of Oxford University, de Hamel communicates the acquisitive passion of these men, lured even by the "strangely seductive" smell of a clean humanist manuscript, and again, most crucially, shows the essential link with the advent of printing. Collectors were soon persuaded of the merits of the printed book.

Throughout his study, Christopher de Hamel has been alert to the close relationship between supply and demand in the production of books - a demand in which need and greed, utility and pleasure were closely entwined, and a supply sensitive to developments in taste and scholarship and the economic transformations of society which identified potential book owners. If we were at all inclined to think of medieval manuscript making as an attractive ornament on the page of medieval history, this book will disabuse us. Book production was central to and expressive of many of the most vital developments of human society between late Antiquity and the Renaissance.

AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

- T. C. Barker is Professor Emeritus of Economic History at the University of London. His books include *The Transport Contractors of Rye, 1982*.
Hugh Brogan's *History of the United States of America, 1985*, will be reissued in paperback later this year.
Peter Brooks is Tripp Professor of Humanities at Yale University. His most recent book is *Reading for the Poet, 1984*.
W. B. Carnochan is the author of *Confinement and Flight: An essay on English literature of the eighteenth century, 1977*.
D. S. Chambers is Reader in Renaissance Studies at the Warburg Institute in the University of London.
Arthur C. Danto is Johnsonian Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University and art critic for the *Nation*.
Eckart Förster is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Stanford University.
Peter France's *Poets of Modern Russia* was published in 1982. He is co-translator, with Jon Stallworthy, of Pasternak's *Selected Poems, 1983*.
Ronald Hingley's books include *Pasternak: A biography, 1984*.
Michael Hofmann's second collection of poems, *Acrimony*, will be published later this year.
Arthur Jacobs is the author of *Arthur Sullivan: A Victorian musician, 1984*, which is to be reissued in paperback later this year.
J. P. Kenyon's *The History Men: The historical profession in England since the Renaissance* was published in 1983.
Eric Korn is an antiquarian bookseller in London.
John Lerner is Titular Professor of History in the University of Glasgow. His book *Italy in the Age of Dante and Petrarch, 1980*, was reissued in paperback in 1983.
Richard Lintley is lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Bradford. His book *Autonomy* will be published shortly.
Rosamond McKitterick's book *The Carolingians and the Written Word* will be published next year.
Robert G. O'Malley is the author of *The Craft of Ralph Ellison, 1981*.
Roy Porter is the author of *English Society in the Eighteenth Century, 1982*, and is a lecturer at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, London.
Brian Pullan is Professor of Modern History at the University of Manchester and the author of *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice 1550-1670, 1983*.
Pat Rogers's books include *Eighteenth Century Encounters: Studies in literature and society in the age of Walpole, 1985*.
Alan Ross is the author of *Ranji: A biography, 1983*.
Carol Rumens is the editor of *Making for the Open: The Chatterbox of post-feminist poetry 1964-1984, 1985*.
A. J. Smith is Professor of English at the University of Southampton.
Paul Smith is Professor of Modern History at the University of Southampton.
John Turner is the editor of *Businessmen and Politics, 1984*.

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Spinning and winning

Simon Rae

BILL O'REILLY

"Tiger" O'Reilly: Sixty years in cricket
213pp. Collins. £9.95.
0002174774
ADRIAN MCGREGOR
Greg Chappell
286pp. Collins. £9.95.
0002174855

Based in the little Australian outback town of White Cliffs before the First World War, Bill ("Tiger") O'Reilly's father used to make a 1,000-kilometre round trip, on bicycle, every year just after Christmas to sit his annual teaching exams. O'Reilly's own career displays similar qualities of independence, self-reliance and indefatigable perseverance.

He learnt his cricket in a hard school. His first encounter with Bradman was in an up-country match in 1925. He had him dropped by first slip, who was lighting his pipe at the time. Bradman characteristically went on to score 234 not out, with the promise of more next week (Australian club games are played over two weekends). Honour was satisfied when O'Reilly bowled him first ball the following Saturday. While it must have been obvious then that Bradman was destined for his country's team, O'Reilly's route to the top was more tortuous. He became a teacher like his father, but received little encouragement from the New South Wales Education Department to realize his full potential as a cricketer. A posting to a bush school 600 kilometres from Sydney removed him from the spotlight, and he is convinced, deprived him of a trip to England with the Australian team in 1930.

O'Reilly could not be kept out of Test cricket for long, however, and he made his debut against South Africa in 1931. With Clarrie Grimmett, "my treasured bowling partner", he made a superb leg-spin combination in a decade of shirt-front wickets and astronomically high-scoring Test matches. To this day, he cannot forgive the dropping of Grimmett from the 1938 touring party to England, which left him with the bulk of the bowling (85 overs in the Oval Test when England declared at 903 for 7 - O'Reilly took 3 for 178).

Like the legendary S. F. Barnes, with whom Cardus thought he could bear comparison, O'Reilly was a fast leg-break bowler who was perfectly content to open the bowling with the new ball. Despite running to the crease "as though up the slant of the deck of a ship tossing in a heavy swell", he was, according to Cardus, "a classical bowler [with] the classic precision, the classic firmness of purpose". Anyone seeking instruction in the mysteries of leg-spin, however, should still be referred to *The Com-*

plete Leg-break Bowler by C. S. Marriott. O'Reilly is not a theoretician, and, uncoached himself, would have young bowlers learn their craft through experiment and practice.

But this is not to suggest a lack of opinionatedness, in his autobiographical *"Tiger" O'Reilly: Sixty years in cricket*, regarding wider issues in the game. O'Reilly deplores the virtual extinction of the leg-spinner, insisting that "it is only by encouraging spin bowling that footwork will be brought back into the game". There's an engaging Irish propensity in him to blame the English for most of the (cricket) world's ills - they are, after all, "in charge of the rule book" - but there is no lasting grudge over the Bodyline Tour. While agreeing wholly with the description of Bodyline as "unsportsmanlike", O'Reilly dismisses as "silly nonsense" the idea that the series brought "shattering threats to the Empire". And he can even find a good word to say of Jardine.

Balance and boldness

Alan Ross

ALEC BEDSER with ALEX BANNISTER

Twin Ambitions: An autobiography
217pp. Stanley Paul. £9.95.
0091638801
FRANK KEATING
High, Wide and Handsome: Ian Botham - The story of a very special year
218pp. Collins. £10.95.
0002182262

It is hard to imagine two great cricketers more different in temperament, character and approach than Alec Beder and Ian Botham: Beder utterly reliable, conformist, conscientious; Botham instinctive, reckless, easily bored. Beder, a bachelor with no known susceptibilities, remains moored to his Woking background and his twin brother; Botham, married and with a young family, seems susceptible to just about everything. As cricketers they are as different as Hutton was from Compton. Yet, a quarter of a century apart as performers, Botham has played all his cricket under the eyes of Beder, the Test selector. There is quite a lot about Botham in the Beder book and it is, as one would expect, sensible and scrupulously fair.

Beder has had the help of Alex Bannister, formerly of the *Daily Mail*, with his account of his cricketing career and selectorial duties. There were no flies on Bannister as a journalist and in his slightly cynical fashion he was a good judge of a cricketer. It is hard to tell what sort of a job Beder would have made of judging his story, but the involving of Bannister

"Never such innocence again" might be one's response when comparing that brief explosion of telegrams and anger with more recent upheavals in the game: constant short-pitched fast bowling, a gladiatorial atmosphere in which batsmen are run out backing-up, umpires barged, stumps kicked down, bats hurled and V-signs made - a catalogue of "Not Cricket" culminating, as many saw it, in the last ball bowled, or rather rolled, underarm in the one-day international between Australia and New Zealand in 1980, to deny the New Zealanders any chance of hitting the six they required.

Greg Chappell was captain of Australia on that occasion, as he had been in 1977 when the plans were being laid for Kerry Packer's World Series, which, while bringing floodlit cricket, transportable pitches, luridly coloured outfits and a ludicrous mike-in-the-blockhole television intimacy, also brought about far better

has resulted in a fluent and orderly text in which the cricketers and issues of Beder's day are competently dealt with. At the same time, there is a distinct, and perhaps inevitable, loss of the idiosyncratic - dry, caustic, no-nonsense - Beder voice. One can generally recognize Alec Beder thinking in *Twin Ambitions* but unfortunately one can rarely hear him speaking.

There are no revelations in Beder's book, but it is always interesting, consistently informative about bowling techniques and the problems of selection committees, and in general gives a fair report of the period which began with the Beder twins, sons of a bricklayer, joining the Surrey staff just before the war, and ended with Alec as retiring Chairman of the Test Selection Committee and President of Surrey. Eric, his twin, is never far away. He was in fact a useful all-rounder, little below Test standard. A toss of the coin, Alec reveals in this book, decided which Beder should bowl fast and which spin. Eric lost and was obliged to spend his career in the shadow of Jim Laker.

Frank Keating's lively and anecdotal account of a year - 1985 - in the life of Ian Botham is handsomely illustrated. Patrick Eagar has already published a photographic record of Botham's life to date, so inevitably the pictures overlap. But here, as well as Botham bowling and batting, is Botham playing football, Botham on his Walk, Botham *en famille* and Botham playing golf. About the only thing you don't see is Botham, high.

Keating's fulsome manner is not to everyone's taste, but he has roped in most of Botham's Somerset colleagues here and the

result is a vivid, entertaining portrait of a county team travelling through a particular summer. Keating, well informed and with the gift of the gab, is not shy with cliché or jargonale, and some of his judgments are odd, to say the least. Calling Keith Miller "a much more defensive" bowler than Botham suggests Keating never saw Miller bowl. There has never been a less defensive bowler. Perhaps Keating means that not many runs were scored off him - scarcely the same thing.

Certainly, by the end of *High, Wide and Handsome* we get to know Botham reasonably well, the good and the bad. In this portrait, at least, there is considerably more of the former than of the latter. The oddest thing in the book is that Botham is reported in it to have approved of the attenuated and sexless - also unrecognizable - portrait of him recently done by John Bellamy and hung in the National Portrait Gallery. In this Botham is supposed to be presented as a "chivalrous young knight of mediaeval times, the Arthurian paragon and champion". Alas, the head in the portrait has the effete expression of a King's Road hairdresser, while the shoulders are those of a night-club bouncer.

Jacket Photo

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